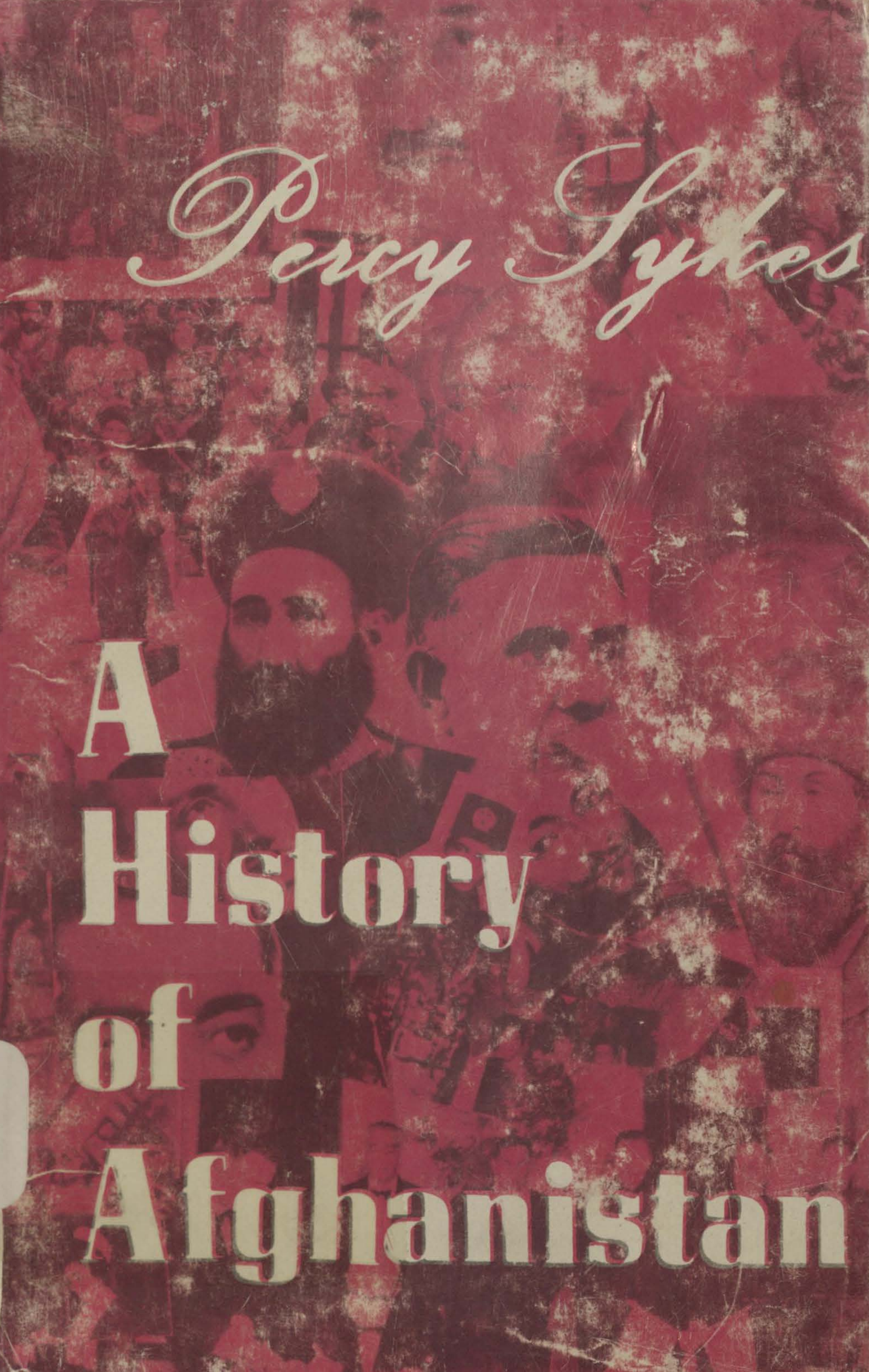

Percy Sykes
A History of Afghanistan

A HISTORY OF AFGHANISTAN

Such is the unity of all history that anyone who endeavours to tell a piece of it must feel that his first sentence tears a seamless web.

SIR FREDERICK POLLOCK

AL-BIRUNI

1st Floor, Al-Imran Mansion,
18 - Link McLeod Road (Patiala Ground)
Lahore (PAKISTAN)



H.M. KING MUHAMMAD ZAHIR SHAH

A HISTORY
OF
AFGHANISTAN

By

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THE FIRST AFGHAN WAR: THE OCCUPATION OF KABUL

The inhabitants of Kabul manifested the most complete indifference to their new sovereign, and expressed no sign of welcome or satisfaction at his accession to the throne. Evidently their hearts and affections were with their previous sovereign, now a wanderer beyond the Hindu Kush.—SIR GEORGE LAWRENCE.

Lord Auckland settles his Policy.—During the siege of Herat, McNeill had sent Major Todd on a mission to induce Auckland to adopt vigorous measures against Persia, since the fall of Herat, in his opinion, was imminent. The Board of Control of the East India Company, realizing the aggressive spirit of Russia, had also urged the Governor-General to take strong action in defence of their eastern possessions. The siege of Herat by Muhammad Shah and his claims to the sovereignty of Kandahar undoubtedly constituted a serious menace to the British in India, and it was clear that a barrier of some sort against invasion from the west was essential. It would have been thought that Dost Muhammad was the best man to support and subsidize, but so influenced was Auckland by Wade's views of the importance of decrepit Ranjit Singh, and also by his own policy of restraining Sikh designs of aggression on Sind, that, having abandoned all ideas of utilizing the Amir, his thoughts turned to the *Maharaja*.

The Mission of Macnaghten to Ranjit Singh.—In May 1838 Macnaghten was accordingly despatched to Lahore on a Mission to discuss the question with the Sikh ruler. Received with due pomp and ceremony, the British envoy referred to the treaty which the *Maharaja* had made with Shah Shuja, and suggested that the British Government should become a party to it. "This", replied Ranjit, "would be adding sugar to milk." Upon the

receipt of this satisfactory answer, Macnaghten went on to say that the Governor-General would supply Shah Shuja with money and officers. It was finally decided that the ex-Amir would march on Kandahar, while a Sikh force, with Timur, the son of Shah Shuja, would march on Kabul *via* Peshawar. The *Maharaja*, generally speaking, was not disposed to help the scheme enthusiastically, since he realized that, if it were successful, the power of the British would be increased to his own detriment, as also would that of Shah Shuja. Moreover, he was aware that the *Khalsa* feared the Khaibar Pass and its warlike custodians. Finally, he realized that he was to pull the chestnuts out of the fire or, to quote the apposite Persian metaphor, "the beak of appetite was to be tempted by the fruit of conquest and the berries of revenge". However, the Tripartite Treaty was duly signed on July 16 by Shah Shuja and on July 23 by the *Maharaja*.[1] It was in effect a treaty between Ranjit Singh and Shah Shuja, which the British Government guaranteed.

The Instructions of the Board of Control.—In May 1838 Auckland had drawn up a minute in which he laid down that the only solution of the Afghan problem was the restoration of Shah Shuja to the throne, and it is a curious fact which deserves mention that, just before this minute reached England, the Board of Control, on October 24, recommended the very course which the Governor-General had decided to adopt. At the same time it was left to the discretion of Lord Auckland to make another effort to gain over Dost Muhammad and his brothers.[2] Unfortunately, when this letter reached India on January 16, 1839, a British army was on its way to invade Afghanistan. It was too late.

The Decision to despatch a British Force to Kabul.—Macnaghten explained to the Governor-General that

[1] This lengthy document is given in full by Kaye, *op. cit.* vol. i, pp. 332-335. By its terms Shah Shuja relinquished all claims on the provinces in the possession of Ranjit Singh. He also engaged to pay him annually 2 lakhs of rupees in return for his armed support in case of need.

[2] The text of this letter is given in *John Russell Colvin*, by Sir Auckland Colvin, pp. 124-128.

Ranjit Singh refused to accept the full responsibility that it had been desired to lay upon him, while it was very difficult to believe that Shah Shuja could, within a reasonable time, raise and discipline a force which would ensure him success. Consequently, in July, Auckland came to the conclusion that a British force must be sent to Kabul to set Shah Shuja on the throne. It is only right, at this point, to place on record a letter which Burnes wrote to Macnaghten:[1] "It remains to be reconsidered why we cannot act with Dost Muhammad. He is a man of undoubted ability, and has at heart a high opinion of the British nation; and if half you must do for others were done for him, and offers made which he could see conduced to his interests, he would abandon Russia and Persia tomorrow." Unfortunately Auckland and his chief advisers lacked vision and insight, and the stage was set for the First Afghan War.

The Simla Manifesto of October 1, 1838.—While a British force was being assembled, the Governor-General issued a Manifesto which denounced the attitude of Dost Muhammad, whose defensive measures against Sikh aggression at the mouth of the Khaibar appear in this document as "a sudden and unprovoked attack upon the troops of our ancient ally Ranjit Singh". Indeed the Manifesto, which is given in full in Appendix A, might in some parts have been drafted by the *Maharaja* himself. To quote Sir Henry Durand: "In order to repel the shadow of Russian aggression, we had resolved to force Shah Shuja, a weakened worthless exile, upon the Afghan people, till then well disposed towards us; and this great and unprovoked injustice, the cause of all our subsequent troubles in Afghanistan, was to be effected by military measures of which the rashness and folly seem at the present day almost inconceivable".[2] To quote Keene: "The only parallel to Auckland's policy was Louis XIV endeavouring to expel William of Orange, to make room for James Stuart".[3]

[1] Dated June 2, 1838.
[2] *Life of Sir Henry Durand*, by Henry Mortimer Durand, vol. i, p. 40.
[3] *History of India*, by H. G. Keene, vol. ii, p. 143.

The Raising of the Siege of Herat.—Before the proclamation was issued, the Shah, as we have seen, had retired baffled from Herat in September 1838. Surely, on the disappearance of the Russo-Persian menace, it would have been the obvious course to have cancelled the military expedition and to have assisted Dost Muhammad by subsidies to strengthen his position in Afghanistan. The Tripartite Treaty had, of course, to be taken into consideration, but it did not pledge the British Government to march troops into Afghanistan, and it seems clear that the invasion of that country should, under the new conditions, have been cancelled.

The Army of the Indus.—The British army for the invasion of Afghanistan was assembled at Ferozepur, 450 miles distant from Sukkur, the point at which the Indus would be crossed. From Sukkur to Kandahar was 400 miles, and from that city to Kabul was 325 miles. The original plan was that two Bengal divisions and one Bombay division should be employed, in case it might be necessary to attack the Persian army besieging Herat. Owing to the retreat of that force, the expeditionary army was reduced to one Bengal and one Bombay division under Sir John Keane, the Bombay Commander-in-Chief.

The Organization of Transport and Supplies.—Army transport, as we know it today, did not exist. To quote Macmunn: "The Indian Army supplied itself from a huge moving city of shops, which followed it a-pack-a-back. . . . The regimental merchants and agents fed the men in staples; shoes and equipments were mended in the bazaars, and every requisite, legitimate or otherwise, except fighting-stores and equipment could be bought from the hucksters and sutlers who followed the army. . . . The huge numbers of followers who maintained these shops, pitched tents, and the like, made sanitation beyond the power of man to establish, and when cholera came it swept the camps." [1]

The Contingent of Shah Shuja.—The force raised by Shah Shuja consisted of six battalions of infantry, two

[1] *Afghanistan*, by Lieut.-General Sir George Macmunn, pp. 117-118.

irregular cavalry regiments and one battery of horse artillery. Recruiting was necessarily hurried, but, under picked British officers, the Gurkhas, the Hindustani and Punjabi Moslems soon improved and constituted a force some 6000 strong.

The Appointments of Mr. W. H. Macnaghten and of Sir Alexander Burnes.—The very important post of "Envoy and Minister on the part of the Government of India at the Court of Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk" was given to Macnaghten. At the same time Burnes was to be employed "under Mr. Macnaghten's directions, as envoy to the chief of Kalat or other states". Auckland explained to him that when the Kalat province had been crossed he would regard him as "an independent political officer to cooperate with Macnaghten".

The Line of March.—Owing to the objections of Ranjit Singh to the British army traversing the Punjab, it was decided that the line of march should run in a south-westerly direction through Bahawalpur and Sind, striking down to the Indus and crossing that river at Bukkur, an island fortress opposite Sukkur. From the Indus it would turn north-west to Shikarpur, would traverse the Bolan Pass to Quetta and thence across the Khojak Pass to Kandahar. It was much the same route as that followed by the ex-Amir in his last unsuccessful attempt to regain the throne. It was also decided that Shah Shuja should raise a large sum of money from the Amirs of Sind, although they held two releases written in Korans duly signed and sealed by him. In the event these Chiefs were treated with injustice and harshness.

The March to Bukkur.—The main British force, marching in the cold season and supplied to some extent with water transport, found the first section of the long march easy, but the Amir of Khairpur, who owned the ancient fortress of Bukkur, situated on the island in the Indus where it had to be crossed, hesitated to allow the British to occupy it. Indeed, after his acceptance of the treaty by which it was to be ceded, powder-bags accompanied the detachment of the troops which was sent to receive possession, by way of precaution, in case it should

be found necessary to blow in the gate.[1]

The March of the Bombay Division.—In December 1838 the Bombay division under Sir John Keane landed at the mouth of the Indus, where Sir Henry Pottinger informed him of the hostility of the Amirs of Haiderabad. Keane thereupon called for the despatch of a reserve force, which arrived at Karachi early in February 1839. Since fire was opened by the Karachi fort, it was bombarded and seized by the British. In the meanwhile the Bengal division which had reached Bukkur had started to march down the Indus to support Keane, and the vacillating Amirs now realized that they must submit. They accordingly signed a treaty by the terms of which they paid tribute to the British, and the Bombay division joined the main force without further incident.

The March up the Bolan Pass.—The Bengal division now advanced to Shikarpur without experiencing difficulty as to supplies, but the next section of the march to Dadur, 146 miles in length, lay across an arid and more or less waterless tract. At Dadur little in the way of supplies had been collected, and Sir Willoughby Cotton, who was in command, decided to draw on the month's supply which accompanied his force, and thus relying entirely on this reserve, entered the difficult Bolan Pass. Burnes had been successful in arranging for the representative of the Khan of Kalat to accompany the column but, even so, the sixty miles of rocks and sand constituting the Pass, which wore to the quick the hoofs of the transport, its scanty grazing and its water tainted by bodies of camels which had fallen by the way, entailed much sickness and a serious loss of artillery horses and camels. Fortunately there was no concerted attack by the wild Baluchi tribesmen.

On March 26, 1839, the tired Bengal column reached the delightful upland of Shal, with Quetta (still known as Shalkot in Persia), then a miserable mud fort, situated on a mound. The force, which was most unwisely ordered

[1] Mir Rustam of Khairpur told Burnes that the cession of his fortress would ruin his good reputation unless Karachi or some other fort were seized from the Haiderabad Amirs. He must therefore have been delighted to hear of the bombardment and capture of Karachi.

by Keane to halt until his arrival, was now faced with famine, in arid Baluchistan, and Cotton perforce reduced the rations of the troops to one-half, while those of the unfortunate followers were reduced to one-quarter. For eleven days the force halted, idly consuming supplies and losing efficiency from lack of proper rations, alike for man and beast. No advantage was taken of this opportunity to send out reconnaissance parties to survey and report on the Khojak Pass. There was apparently no intelligence department in existence at that period.

The Mission of Burnes to the Khan of Kalat.—Burnes visited Mehrab Khan, the Chief of Kalat, who provided a small quantity of grain — there had been a blight in the previous year — and a considerable number of sheep. He frankly told his guest that the British might restore Shah Shuja to the throne, but that the Afghans were opposed to him and that we should fail in the end. He somewhat unwillingly sealed a treaty by the terms of which, in return for an annual subsidy of 1½ lakhs of rupees, he agreed to " use his best endeavours to procure supplies, carriage and guards " in the Kalat province. Actually he had good reason to dislike Shah Shuja, whom he had succoured on his former campaign and now charged with ingratitude; alleging illness, he refused to visit him.

The Advance on Kandahar.—In due course the main body of the army and the Shah, with his contingent, reached Quetta. Letters were received from the Kandahar Barakzai brothers, who were anxious to negotiate for terms and were, it was clear, most unlikely to resist. Shah Shuja thereupon led the advance across the Khojak Pass, and, upon approaching Kandahar, was met by some of the leading Chiefs, who were rewarded with lavish gifts of money.

The Entry of Shah Shuja into Kandahar.—On April 25, with pomp and circumstance, Shah Shuja re-entered Kandahar. He was warmly welcomed by the townspeople, according to the reports received by Macnaghten, but it would appear that many of the influential Chiefs waited to see how events would shape themselves before

giving their allegiance to an Amir who was supported by a British army and who was considered to be unlucky. The Barakzai brothers, in the first instance, proceeded to Girishk and then rode off to Seistan. They received offers of a residence in India with allowances, but preferred to retain their liberty, hoping, no doubt, that the British troops would before long be withdrawn.

The Position at Kandahar.—Keane had now accomplished one of the main objects of the expedition and decided to rest his force and reorganize his transport train. The question of supplies was unsatisfactory, those available at Kandahar being scanty, but the crops were ripe and would soon be harvested.

The Mission to Herat.—After the retreat of the Persian army, Pottinger and Stoddart had remained at Herat to help its unfortunate inhabitants, who were starving. Yar Muhammad, the main source of whose income was slave-dealing, was hostile to the activities of the British officers. Later, Stoddart was instructed to proceed to Bukhara, where he was imprisoned and murdered by its ruler, while Pottinger was insulted and his house was attacked by the retainers of Yar Muhammad in January 1839. At the same time the infamous Vizier opened up relations with the Persian Court and the Kandahar brothers, with a view to opposing the reinstatement of Shah Shuja. Needless to say the Persian Court declined to take any open part in this policy.

Upon the arrival of the British at Kandahar, Yar Muhammad hastened to congratulate the British. Macnaghten thereupon decided to send a Mission to Herat under Major Todd, who had been a member of the British Military Mission in Persia, to replace Pottinger. With him were James Abbot and Richmond Shakespear, both of whom subsequently won fame in Central Asia. Their Mission included the conciliation of the good-will of Shah Kamran and of Yar Muhammad, the strengthening of the fortifications at Herat and the determination as far as was possible of the boundaries of the province. They were supplied with guns and considerable sums of money.

The Position of Dost Muhammad.—The peaceful occupation by the British of Kandahar hardly astonished the Amir but nevertheless it constituted a blow to his position, since news reached him that the neighbouring Chiefs, won over by gold, were joining his enemy. He had despatched Akbar Khan to hold the passes against the Sikh army, which was assembling at Peshawar; another son, Haider Khan, garrisoned Ghazni, and Afzal Khan [1] with a body of cavalry was stationed in the vicinity of the fortress. It had been reported that the British would march on Herat and again that they would mask Ghazni and march on Kabul. In any case the position of Dost Muhammad was one of very great difficulty.

The Advance up the Khaibar Pass of the Sikh Force.—Before describing the advance of the British army on Ghazni and Kabul, a brief notice of Prince Timur and his Sikh supporters is called for. Accompanied by Wade, he left Lahore in January 1839 and recruited troops at Peshawar with some difficulty, as the Sikh Commander thwarted his schemes by endeavouring to gain allies for Ranjit Singh. That potentate died on June 29, before the forcing of the Khaibar Pass by Wade's force, entirely by means of his own troops, helped to complete the success of a campaign in which he wished the British to be defeated.

The Advance on Ghazni, June 27, 1839.—Towards the end of June it was decided to march on Kabul. Optimistic Macnaghten guaranteed Keane that not a shot would be fired, and proposed that the Bombay division should be left at Kandahar. The British leader mistrusted Macnaghten's predictions and insisted on the army being kept as a united force. He was, however, persuaded by the officer commanding the artillery to leave behind the four 18-pounders, his only siege guns. Accordingly, two battalions of Indian troops, a body of the Shah's cavalry and the siege guns were left to hold Kandahar. Partly owing to the Ghilzai tribesmen being engaged in harvesting operations, the column was not

[1] Afzal Khan was the eldest son and the father of Abdur Rahman Khan, the great Amir.

attacked on the march. Ghazni, however, with its parapet rising to a height of 70 feet and surrounded by a wide wet ditch, in the absence of siege guns, appeared to be as impregnable as Afghans boasted that it was. Fortunately, however, a traitor gave the priceless information that, although most of the city gates had been built up, the Kabul gate had been left open — presumably to serve as a bolt-hole. Supplies had fallen short, and rejecting the suggestion of the Chief Engineer to mask the fortress and march on Kabul, Keane gave orders to carry Ghazni by a *coup de main*.

Sir Henry Durand, at that time a lieutenant in the Bengal Engineers, was ordered to lead the powder party, and since the exploit was the crowning achievement of the campaign, I am giving a full account of it:

> The morning star was high in the heavens, and the first red streak of approaching morning was on the horizon, when the explosion party stepped forward to its duty. In perfect silence, led by the engineer Durand, they advanced to within 150 yards of the works, when a challenge from the walls, a shot, and a shout, told that the party was discovered. Instantly the garrison were on the alert; their musketry rang free and quick from the ramparts, and blue lights suddenly glared on the top of the battlements, brilliantly illuminating the approach to the gate. A raking fire from the low outer works, which swept the bridge at half pistol-shot, would have annihilated the engineers and their men, but, strange to say, though the ramparts flashed fire from every loophole, the bridge was passed without a shot from the lower works, at the sally-port of which the engineer Peat took post, prepared, with a small party of the 13th, to repel any sally of swordsmen. Without a blow from a sword or a shot from the lower works, and without the loss of a man from the heavy fire of the battlements, Durand reached the gate, and having laid the first bag of powder containing the end of the hose, man after man stepped up, deposited his powder, and retired as they had advanced, in single file, edging the foot of the wall, and under the eye and charge of the engineer Macleod.[1]

To continue the narrative: there was some delay owing to the portfire not immediately igniting, but finally " a column of flame and smoke rising above the

[1] *The First Afghan War*, by Major-General Sir Henry Durand, pp. 177-178.



THE KABUL GATE OF GHAZNI

(From Durand, *The First Afghan War*. Longmans Green)

(After a sketch by Sir Henry Durand)

gateway and followed by a dull heavy report, proved that the charge was sprung ".

Then followed a delay. Peat's bugler had been killed and, by mistake, a bugler with the main column sounded the retreat. Fortunately the error was speedily rectified; the storming column charged cheering through the gateway to be followed by the main column, and Ghazni was captured by storm, with slight losses in killed and wounded, on July 23, 1839.

At that time the Victoria Cross had not been instituted, but, some forty years later, Durand's exploit was commemorated by the foundation of a " Durand Medal ", which is still awarded to Indian officers of the Corps of Sappers and Miners. The troops were honoured by a special Ghazni medal, and the storming party of the 13th Somerset Light Infantry gained a mural crown as a distinction for the regiment.

The Flight of Dost Muhammad.—The capture of Ghazni struck terror among the Afghans and paralysed the resistance of Dost Muhammad. He sent his brother, the Nawab Jabbar Khan, to the British camp with the proposal that the Amir should be prime minister to Shah Shuja, but Macnaghten coldly refused it, offering in its stead an " honourable asylum " in India. Jabbar Khan declined and left the camp.

To his army encamped at Urghundeh Dost Muhammad made one final appeal with the Koran in his hand, calling upon his adherents to remember that they were Moslems and adjuring them to fight the invading British or to die. However, his supporters were thunderstruck by the storming of Ghazni and not only was he deserted, but his camp was looted by his personal servants. Realizing the situation, the Amir, encumbered with women and children, fled, and although hotly pursued, escaped to Balkh. His intention had been to take refuge in Persia, but being offered an asylum by Nasrulla Khan of Bukhara he proceeded to the Court of the Uzbeg Amir.

The Occupation of Kabul.—Keane halted a week at Ghazni, which was found to be well stocked with supplies, and, leaving a garrison to hold it, marched on towards

his goal. No opposition was offered, and on August 7 Shah Shuja, without a show of welcome by his subjects, made his public entry into Kabul, thirty years after having fled the country. Thanks to British gold and British bayonets, he had been restored to the throne of his ancestors.

CHAPTER XXX

THE SURRENDER OF AMIR DOST MUHAMMAD

A mock King; a civil administration hated because under foreign dictation and dissonant from the feelings of the Afghans; an envoy, the real King, ruling by gleam of British bayonets, and thus enabled to impose his measures however crude or unpalatable; a large army, raising by its consumption the price of provisions, and preying on the resources of a very poor country; these were the inevitable concomitants of having shrunk from at once, in good faith and in good policy, withdrawing the British army, while the moral impression made by its entire success was fresh and deep upon the Afghan mind.—Sir Henry Durand.

The Views of Lord Auckland.—The objects of the Army of the Indus, which were the expulsion of Dost Muhammad, together with his brothers who ruled at Kandahar, and the restoration of Shah Shuja to the throne, had been accomplished. Dost Muhammad and his two sons, Afzal and Akbar, had fled to Bukhara and had virtually been made prisoners by the Uzbeg ruler. The tribes had submitted and, in Macnaghten's opinion, although this was not the general view, had welcomed Shuja. It now apparently only remained to redeem Auckland's promise that "when once he (Shah Shuja) shall be secured in power, and the independence and integrity of Afghanistan established, the British army will be withdrawn ".[1]

There were many weighty objections to the continued occupation of Afghanistan by British troops. It was, however, the considered opinion of Auckland that were British troops entirely withdrawn, Shah Shuja would not be able to maintain himself, and that, to withdraw them and then to be followed down the Khaibar Pass by a refugee Amir, would constitute a disgrace which the

[1] In this chapter I have consulted *Forty-three Years in India*, by Lieut.-General Sir George Lawrence, a work, based on his letters, which, owing to his position as Military Secretary to Macnaghten, is of the greatest value.

Government was not prepared to face. The Governor-General accordingly laid down that a brigade of all arms should be sufficient to keep Shuja on the throne and that the rest of the army should be withdrawn. It is to be noted that the war was already constituting a very serious drain on Indian finances.

The Withdrawal of British Troops.—Keane, whose views coincided with those of the Governor-General, led a column of troops, which included horse artillery and cavalry, down the Khaibar Pass to India in October. The turbulent Afridis had been promised their customary allowances by Shah Shuja but, since his promise was not implemented, they attacked Ak Masjid and harassed detachments until Macnaghten decided to pay the recognized sums.

The Storming of Kalat.—The Bombay division was ordered to march back to India through the Bolan Pass. It turned aside to storm Kalat, where the behaviour of Mehrab Khan was considered to have been unsatisfactory. The Indian troops, who had not taken part in the storming of Ghazni, covered themselves with glory, since the fort was very strong and the resistance offered was desperate. It would appear that Mehrab Khan, who was killed, did not deserve his fate, but was betrayed by his own retainers. As a result of this successful operation, Shal, Mastung and Cutch were added to the domains of Shah Shuja.

The Arrival at Kabul of Colonel Wade and Prince Timur.—To return to Wade, his task at Peshawar was a difficult one. Ranjit Singh was dead; his representatives were bent on increasing the influence of Lahore and the Sikhs feared the Khaibar Pass. Finally, Timur proved to be a nonentity. Nothing daunted, however, Wade enlisted a motley force which was disciplined by capable British officers, and as mentioned above, forcing the Khaibar Pass, the column attacked Ak Masjid. The artillery bombardment disheartened the garrison, which was not supported by Akbar Khan, he having been recalled to the capital by Dost Muhammad. The stronghold was consequently evacuated and no further opposition was encountered. On September 3, Wade, to whom much credit is due

on, this occasion, reached Kabul with a body of troops which constituted a reinforcement. While at Peshawar he had also corresponded with various important Chiefs at Kabul and had done much to undermine the position of Dost Muhammad.

The Distribution of Troops in Afghanistan.—By a general order dated October 9, under the command of Major-General Sir Willoughby Cotton, the 13th Light Infantry, three guns of No. 6 Light Field Battery and the 35th Native Infantry were to remain at Kabul and to be accommodated in the Bala Hissar. The 48th Native Infantry, the 4th Brigade and 2nd Cavalry were to be cantoned at Jalalabad. Ghazni was to be garrisoned by the 16th Native Infantry, by a squadron of Skinner's Horse and by detachments of the Shah's contingent. Finally, under Major-General Nott, Kandahar was to be held by the 42nd and 43rd Native Infantry, with the 4th Co. 2nd Battalion Artillery, two squadrons of Skinner's Horse and some of the Shah's contingent.

The Despatch of Troops to Bamian.—The danger to the restored monarchy in Afghanistan lay principally in the possibility of Dost Muhammad returning to Afghan Turkistan and raising a force in that area. Accordingly a detachment of Shah Shuja's army with some field artillery was despatched to garrison Bamian during the winter — a dangerous dispersal of troops. Dr. Lord, the political officer, created local hostility by attacking a Hazara fort whose inhabitants had refused to sell their scanty supplies of forage, on which their own cattle depended in the winter. The assailants fired the forage and the unfortunate Hazaras were burned alive or shot. He also pushed forward troops to Bajgah and occupied Saighan, situated on the northern slopes of the Hindu Kush. Although these forward movements resulted in Jabbar Khan placing himself and the family of Dost Muhammad under British protection, the political effect was unsatisfactory and attacks were made on these outlying detachments, which were ultimately withdrawn.

The King and Macnaghten proceed to Jalalabad.—In the autumn the King and Macnaghten, in accordance

with the usual custom of the Afghan rulers, left for Jalalabad, and Burnes, whose advice had apparently not been sought by Macnaghten, was left in temporary political charge. The economic position at Kabul was unsatisfactory, since the cost of living had been raised by the purchase of large quantities of supplies at high prices for the use of troops. The grain and forage that were grown in the neighbourhood did not suffice for the supply of the large demands made by the British.

The Russian Expedition against Khiva.—Upon receiving information of Perovski's expedition, which is described in Chapter XXXV, Macnaghten, who feared that the occupation of Khiva would have been followed by that of Bukhara, seriously thought of despatching a British force against the latter state in order to forestall Russia, thus proving his unsuitability for the very important post he was occupying. At this period he also proposed sending Burnes on a mission to the Russian camp. To this suggestion Burnes replied that he would willingly go if ordered, and not deeming this comment sufficiently enthusiastic, Macnaghten abandoned the plan. The complete failure of the Russian expedition transformed the situation and was a great relief to him.

The Sikh Question.—Another important question was the attitude of the Sikhs since the death of Ranjit Singh. They had, as we have seen, rendered no effectual help to Wade and Timur; they were not maintaining a contingent force in return for the subsidy granted by the Tripartite Treaty, and they were encouraging Ghilzai refugees to foment disturbances against Shah Shuja from the shelter of their frontier forts. Macnaghten realized very clearly that, without the right of way across the Punjab, which the *Khalsa* strongly objected to grant, the British position in Afghanistan would rapidly deteriorate.

The Position at Herat.—Yar Muhammad had quickly shown his true character to Major D'Arcy Todd. The treaty, by which Shah Kamran bound himself not to negotiate with other states without the consent of the British Resident, had only been signed a few weeks when proof was forthcoming that the treacherous Vizier was

seeking the protection of the Persian Government and was proposing a treaty for the expulsion from Afghanistan of the infidel British!

As was to be supposed, Yar Muhammad hated Todd, who was anxious to abolish the slave trade in Central Asia, just as he had hated Pottinger. To meet the situation, Macnaghten strongly recommended that a British force should be despatched against Herat, which city, upon its capture, should be annexed to Shah Shuja's dominions. But Auckland decided to send money and still more money — and Yar Muhammad continued to intrigue with the Persian Government. Our policy was founded on bayonets or gold. Finally, realizing the folly of his money-bag policy — the advances to the people and Governor of Herat amounted to £200,000 — Auckland was disposed to resort to bayonets, but the Commander-in-Chief pointed out that any advance upon Herat or Bukhara was out of the question.

Before long, Yar Muhammad was proved guilty of inciting the Durranis of Zamindavar to rise. Moreover, in February 1841, he demanded still more money, and when Todd replied that he would require some guarantee that such concessions would not be thrown away, the Vizier demanded the money or the departure of the Mission. To quote Kaye: "Never before, perhaps, had the British Government been so insulted and so outraged in the person of its representatives. . . . There is little doubt that, if the Mission had remained longer at Herat, the members of it would have been subjected to indignities of the worst kind."[1]

Auckland, instead of showing sympathy for Todd, removed him from political employment. He further lowered British prestige by writing conciliatory letters to Yar Muhammad, expressing regret at occurrences which had interrupted mutual good relations.

The Position of Shah Shuja.—Shah Shuja was a monarch supported by foreign troops. Apart from the British garrisons, there was the Shah's army, to which were added local corps, all officered by the British and paid by

[1] *Op. cit.* vol. ii, p. 110.

them. With these troops occupying forts in commanding positions, taxes were levied and the turbulent Afghans, to some extent, were controlled. It is to be noted, however, that Macnaghten retained in his own hands the right to send out expeditions against revolting tribes. He settled the strength of each force and gave detailed instructions to their commanders as to the objectives and the method to be followed for their attainment. The British thus incurred unpopularity for these expeditions, many of which were necessitated by the tyranny and greed of the Shah and his favourites. They were undesirable from the military point of view, while the system was not only bound to be unpopular to the independent, fanatical Afghans but also to the Amir, who resented his lack of power. We have seen how Ahmad Shah instituted a feudal system under which each tribe was liable to military service. The new system, however, was far beyond the capacity of poverty-stricken Afghanistan to support and was thoroughly unsound.

From his own point of view, Shah Shuja realized that he was only a King in name and proofs were not lacking that he and his Ministers were secretly fomenting disturbances in Zamindawar and elsewhere. Indeed, it was only reasonable to expect that, chafing under the system imposed upon him, he would constantly throw grit into the creaking machinery of dual government. Had he been allowed to rule his subjects by Afghan methods with the support of a subsidy, he might possibly have succeeded, although the fact that Dost Muhammad, who was virtually held a prisoner by the Amir of Bukhara, was still liable to reappear on the scene certainly constituted a serious element in a difficult problem.

The Position in Afghanistan, 1840.—In the spring, the Ghilzais, who had given trouble in the previous autumn and had been punished by Captain Outram, again rebelled and cut the communications between Kandahar and Kabul. A composite force under Captain Anderson marched out and attacked a body some 2000 strong. With the valour for which the tribe is noted, the Ghilzais charged twice but were beaten off with heavy loss. After



THE CITY OF KABUL FROM THE BALA HISSAR

(From Holdich, *The Indian Borderland.* Methuen)

some negotiations, Macnaghten decided to pay the Chiefs the equivalent of £3000 per annum, in return for guaranteeing the safety of the road.

In the Kalat area the youthful son of Mehrab Khan, crying for vengeance, attacked Kalat, and Newaz Khan, to whom it had been given, abdicated in favour of the rightful heir. The political officer, Lieutenant Loveday, was made a prisoner and was subsequently murdered.

The Adventures of Dost Muhammad.—At this period the refugee Amir escaped from Bukhara. His horse fell, tired out, but, dyeing his beard with ink, he thereby baffled the vigilance of the Amir's officials and crossed the Oxus. There he was welcomed by the Vali of Khulm and was able to raise a strong force among the Uzbegs of the province, so that, early in September, he advanced on Bamian at the head of 6000 men. The British had evacuated both Bajgah and Saighan, but an Afghan regiment, which had garrisoned these posts, deserted with its arms and ammunition to their late ruler.

The reappearance of Dost Muhammad on the scene had created a ferment not only in Kabul, but also in the Kuhistan to the north of the capital, and indeed all over the country. There was also proof that Nao Nehal Singh, the ruling Sikh Prince, was in communication with him, while Sikh emissaries were busy in Afghanistan with anti-British propaganda.

The Defeat of Dost Muhammad, September 1840.—Brigadier Dennie had been despatched to Bamian with reinforcements consisting of an Indian regiment, and had taken command of the troops. He met the enemy, who had occupied several forts north of the defile leading into the Bamian Valley. His artillery wrought havoc on the dense bodies of Uzbeg horsemen, who finally broke and were pursued for miles along the narrow defile. Dost Muhammad escaped by the speed of his horse. This opportune victory resulted in the Vali of Khulm tendering his submission and promising not to aid Dost Muhammad or his sons. In Northern Afghanistan the reaction was temporarily most favourable to the British.

The Reappearance of Dost Muhammad in the Kuhistan.

—The dauntless ex-Amir had said: "I resemble a wooden spoon: you may throw me hither and thither, but I shall not be hurt". He reappeared in the Kuhistan, where the lawless chiefs, who strongly objected to paying taxes, joined him. To meet this rebellion, Sale marched out and attempted to storm a strong fort, but failed. The rebels subsequently evacuated the position, but the failure of the storming party affected British prestige. The incessant activities of Dost Muhammad caused alarm at Kabul, and Macnaghten, fearing a siege, called for reinforcements from India. On November 2, at Purwandarra, Dost Muhammad engaged the Indian cavalry, which fled, while its British officers, charging the enemy unsupported, were killed or wounded. Among the killed was Dr. Lord. The Afghan horsemen then attacked the British infantry position, which remained firm, and the enemy were finally driven from the field. After this action Burnes, who was unduly depressed by it, advised Macnaghten that the force should fall back on Kabul, on which centre all British troops should be concentrated.

The Surrender of Dost Muhammad.—The virile Afghans hold high ideals as to valour, and the ex-Amir realized that, while he had scattered the Indian cavalry, he could not defeat the British. Considering then that he could surrender with honour, after his successful charge, he rode towards Kabul and, meeting Macnaghten, who was riding outside the city with George Lawrence, dramatically seized the envoy's hand, "which he put to his forehead and his lips as a sign of submission". Lawrence adds to his account: "The appearance of the Dost was rather disappointing, quite different from what I had imagined. He was a robust, powerful man, with a sharp aquiline nose, highly arched eyebrows, and a grey beard and moustache, which evidently had not been trimmed for a long time."

In accordance with the best British traditions, the gallant Afghan was treated with honour, not only by the envoy but also by British officers, who paid him marked attention, Macnaghten, indeed, in a letter claiming liberal treatment for our enemy, wrote: "Shah Shuja

had no claim upon us. We had no hand in depriving him of his kingdom, whereas we ejected the Dost, who never offended us, in support of our policy, of which he was the victim."[1] For this generous candour we can forgive much to Macnaghten.

On November 12, 1840, Dost Muhammad left Kabul under escort for India, where he was received with courtesy and generous hospitality. Granted an annual allowance of 2 lakhs of rupees, he settled down at Calcutta —and watched events.

The surrender and deportation of Dost Muhammad, which created a period of unprecedented tranquillity, would seem to have left no excuse for the British force remaining in Afghanistan. The only formidable rival of Shah Shuja had disappeared off the scene and the British army should have followed him to India, more especially as Shah Shuja considered that he could now maintain himself on the throne without our support.

To quote Durand: "No more striking event could be conceived for an honourable termination to the armed occupation of Afghanistan, and for the triumphant return of the Anglo-Indian army to its own frontier. By furnishing so unhoped for an occasion, Providence removed all reasonable ground of excuse or hesitation, and afforded the Indian Government the very occasion which it preferred to await." Incredible as it seems to the historian, Macnaghten decided that British troops must remain in Afghanistan. He thus became responsible for the tragedy which was so soon to follow his unwise decision.

[1] Sir W. Macnaghten to Mr. Robertson, Jan. 12, 1841.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE RETREAT FROM KABUL

Their plain duty was to have attacked the rebels in the city the moment they realized what was going on, and those who refused or neglected to give orders to that effect, involved the many brave men who served under them, and who asked for nothing better than to die sword in hand, in undeserved blame.—WELLINGTON.

In the pages of a heathen writer, over such a story as this would be cast the shadow of a tremendous Nemesis.—KAYE.

The Position in the Kandahar Province.—Upon hearing of the departure of the British Mission from Herat, Macnaghten wished to organize an expedition against that city. This proposal was not countenanced by Auckland or the Commander-in-Chief in India, but the aggressive designs of Yar Muhammad on Girishk and the hostility of the Durranis, which he had excited, rendered military operations necessary. The position at Kandahar was unsatisfactory. Prince Timur had been appointed Governor with some of the Ludhiana exiles as his staff. These individuals, as might have been expected, were mainly anxious to fill their empty pockets and alienated alike the haughty, but greedy, Durrani Chiefs and the common people. Fortunately Nott was well supported by Captain (later Sir Henry) Rawlinson, who was destined to become the leading authority on Central Asia, and their difficult task was dealt with firmly and successfully.

The Expedition against the Ghilzais and the Durranis, 1841.—In the spring of 1841, the first outbreak to be dealt with was that of the Western Ghilzais, who attacked a British column under Colonel Wymer near Kalat-i-Ghilzai. The tribesmen bravely charged again and again, but were defeated by the steady musketry fire of the Sepoys, supported by grape from the guns, and left

many dead on the battlefield.

The proceedings of Aktur Khan, a son of Dost Muhammad, who was preparing a force to attack Kandahar, had next to be dealt with. A British column was despatched in July and found the Durranis encamped on the right bank of the Helmand. The enemy crossed the river and attacked, but were defeated with heavy loss by the combined efforts of the artillery and infantry. Realizing that the situation was serious and having no confidence in his mounted troops, Captain Woodburn was content with his success against superior numbers and did not attempt a pursuit. Later, Captain Griffin, at the head of a powerful column, attacked the Durranis, who held a strong position in walled gardens and small forts. They opened a heavy fire on the advancing troops but were defeated and finally broken up by a cavalry charge. Nott was invariably successful in his operations and should have been appointed to succeed Cotton, as the Commander-in-Chief wished.

The Views of the Secret Committee.—It is of considerable importance at this juncture to note that, at the end of 1840, the Secret Committee had written to Auckland that they could see nothing in the continued support of Shah Shuja, who, it was clear, had not secured the goodwill of his subjects, to compensate for the alarming drain on the financial resources of India. To quote from this despatch: "We pronounce our decided opinion that for many years to come the restored monarchy will have need of a British force, in order to maintain peace in its own territory, and prevent aggression from without. We must add that to attempt to accomplish this by a small force, or by the mere influence of British Residents, will, in our opinion, be most unwise and frivolous, and that we should prefer the entire abandonment of the country and a frank confession of complete failure, to any such policy."

The Rising of the Eastern Ghilzais.—During the spring and summer of 1841, apart from the risings above mentioned, Macnaghten was satisfied that all was well. Indeed, in a letter dated August 20, he wrote with un-

justifiable complacency: "The country is perfectly quiet from Dan to Beersheba".[1]

Macnaghten had been appointed Governor of Bombay and was about to make over charge to Burnes in October, when news was received that the Eastern Ghilzai tribes had risen *en masse* and had severed communications with India *via* Jalalabad. Instead of evacuating the country, as the Secret Committee had recommended, Auckland, with supreme lack of insight, had decided on the fatal policy of half measures and stopped payment of allowances on which the vital communications of the Kabul force depended. Many other allowances were also discontinued which, naturally, created feelings of intense resentment among the Chiefs and even in the Shah himself.

The March of Sale to Jalalabad.—Sale's brigade, which was under orders to return to India, was instructed to reopen the route closed by the Ghilzais.[2] Starting on

[1] Letter to Mr. Robertson quoted by Kaye, *op. cit.* vol. ii, p. 130.

[2] In view of its importance, I am reproducing an interesting "Route from Cabool to Peshawer" from *The March and Operations of the Army of the Indus in the Expedition to Afghanistan*, by Major Hough. In my chapter on "The Third Afghan War" I give a sketch map of the Khyber — as it was then termed — which might also be consulted in connexion with this and the following chapters :

ROUTE FROM CABOOL TO PESHAWER

Stages	M.	F.	Remark
Boot Khak, 6,247 feet,	8	7	Cross the Laghar and Khoord Cabool rivers.
Khoord Cabool, 7,466 feet,	9	0	Through a pass 6 miles long. Cross the stream 23 times.
Tezeen, the Pass, 8,173; Valley, 6,488 feet,	12	7	The road crosses over 7 Kotils (Passes). Camp in the valley. Water from the river.
Ararent, or the Giants' tomb,	8	6	Road over a valley of stones. Water not good.
Rood-i-Kutta Sung,	4	6	Ascents and descents, road over stones. Cross the Bareek-ab 5,313 feet.
Jugduluk, 5,375 feet,	7	4	A contracted Pass for 3½ miles, crossing the stream often.
Soork-ab, 4,373 feet,	13	0	Ascents and descents. Last part very difficult road. Camp near the heights.
Sufed Sung (Gundumuk, 4,616 ft.),	9	6	Ascents and descents. Enter valley of Gundumuk (usual halting place.) Last 3 miles bad road.
Futehabad, 3,098 feet,	11	7	Valley of Neemla to the right. Ascents and descents. Cross the river Neemla. Ascents and descents (defiles).
Sultanpoor, 2,286 feet,	7	4	Road over a low flat and stony desert.
JELLALABAD, 1,964 feet,	8	7	Road over a sandy tract. The Cabool river ¾ mile to S. of the town.

[*Footnote continued on opposite page.*

October 20, he halted at Tezin for some days, where Captain MacGregor, the political officer, who considered that the rising was due to "the harsh and unjust" action of the British, agreed to the restoration of the coveted allowances to the tribesmen. Sale, influenced by MacGregor, neglected to carry out the orders given him to seize the Tezin fort. He equally violated the vital principle that, in Asia, no concession should be made to an unbeaten enemy.

Although accompanied by the Ghilzai Chiefs, the tribesmen, who were entirely out of control, attacked the column beyond Jagdalak. From the heights and all salient points a heavy fire was poured on the British. The light troops, however, gradually drove the tribesmen from their points of vantage and the advance guard found the main outlet clear. However, the Ghilzais, thirsting for loot, made a concentrated attack on the rear-guard, which suffered very heavy losses.

Sale reached Gandamak on October 29, where he found a force known as Burne's *jezailchis*. He halted at this village until November 11, and then marched through a hostile country to Jalalabad, which he occupied on November 13.

The retreat from Gandamak to Jalalabad speedily caused the local situation to deteriorate. Burne, who had

Alee Boghan, 1,911 feet,	6	6	First part sandy. Last 3 miles over stony road. A jungle of rushes 3 miles from camp.
Chardeh, (Bareek-ab, 1,822 feet),	14	1	First part an ascent, thence enter a wide valley, where the *simoom* prevails in the hot season. At 9 miles village of Bareek-ab. Cross the Rood-i-Butter Kot.
Huzarnow, (Bassool, 1,509 feet),	11	6	There are 2 roads which join at Bassool. The nearest in an E. direction, the other S.E.
Dakka, (Lalpoora, 1,404 feet),	9	0	At 6 miles the small Khyber Pass, Dakka on right. Lalpoora on the left bank of Cabool river.
KHYBER PASS, Lundee Khana, 2,488 feet, Summit of Pass 3,373 feet,	8	7	At 1 mile from Dakka, enter the Pass.
Ali Musjid, W. 2,433 feet,	13	6	In the Pass, 12 miles, we encamped 1½ beyond it.
Kuddum, out of the Pass, (Jumrood, 1,670 feet),	10	1	Road through and out of the Pass.
Koulsir,	7	0	Pass on the left the fort of Futehgurh. The road sandy and stony.
PESHAWAR, 1,068 feet,	8	5	
From Cabool,	193	4	

been instructed by Sale to hold the Gandamak fort, was almost immediately attacked by the Afridis under his command and, perforce leaving his baggage and two guns in the hands of the mutineers, he followed Sale to Jalalabad.

The Refusal of Sale to return to Kabul.—While halting at Gandamak, Sale had been ordered to march back to Kabul. Instead of acting on his instructions he called a Council of War, the members of which pronounced against compliance. As Durand points out, even had he halted at Gandamak, his brigade would have threatened the passes and would have "necessarily paralysed a portion of the Ghilzai strength . . . whilst at the same time ensuring to Elphinstone the comparative safe and easy withdrawal of the force from Kabul. . . . When the issue of the rebellion was as yet uncertain, and energy might have quelled it, he withdrew from the struggle and remained shut up within distant walls, there to court and abide investment, at the leisure of an unembarrassed and triumphant enemy." There is little doubt that Durand was justified in his scathing remarks. His opinion is supported by Keene who wrote: "It is the opinion of the best military critics that if he [Sale] had returned to Kabul, or if he had only remained encamped at Gandamak, he might have averted the impending disaster".[1]

The British Cantonment at Kabul.—Before describing the tragic events that were about to occur, some account must be given of the British cantonment. Measuring 1000 by 600 yards, it was situated on a low-lying piece of ground near the Kuhistan road, surrounded and commanded on every side by forts which were neither occupied nor demolished, and by hills; its weak breastwork could be ridden over. To add to its defects, the whole of the supplies were stored in a small fort situated at some distance from its perimeter, with an intervening fort and a walled garden, which were not under British control. Finally, it was separated from the Bala Hissar by the Kabul river.

Who was to blame for this disgraceful state of affairs?

[1] *History of India*, by H. G. Keene, vol. ii, p. 154.

Durand had urged the necessity for constructing barracks in the Bala Hissar and, to some extent, these were constructed, and were occupied by British troops during the first winter. But Macnaghten had, later, with no proper regard for the safety of the British garrison, handed over the barracks to Shah Shuja for the accommodation of his harem. Sturt, who had succeeded Durand, and Roberts, father of the great soldier bearing that name, had insisted on the supreme importance of occupying the Bala Hissar, but had been met with Macnaghten's definite refusal.

General W. K. Elphinstone.—Sir Willoughby Cotton, who was responsible for selecting the site of the cantonment, left Kabul in the winter of 1840 and handed over charge at Jalalabad to General Elphinstone with the unfortunate observation: "You will have nothing to do here. All is peace." Indeed, so far did this belief prevail that Macnaghten permitted officers to arrange for their wives and families to proceed to Afghanistan.

In April 1841 Elphinstone travelled with the Envoy to Kabul. He is described by George Lawrence, who was a member of the party, as being "altogether without Indian experience. He was evidently in very weak health, suffering acutely from chronic rheumatic gout, so much so that it was understood he had for a long time declined, on account of his infirmities, to accept the command in Afghanistan, and only consented when it was so urgently pressed upon him by the Governor-General, that as a soldier he could no longer refuse."[1] Actually Elphinstone, whose health became worse, had decided to return to India with Macnaghten, and Nott had been appointed to succeed him temporarily, but, most unfortunately, was unable to take up the appointment.

The Murder of Burnes.—The weakening of the British force at Kabul, the successful rising of the Ghilzais and the spreading disaffection in the Kuhistan, led to a conspiracy being formed by Abdulla Khan Achakzai, who hated Burnes and spread the rumour that several of the Chiefs would be arrested and sent to London — a dire

[1] *Op. cit.* pp. 55-56.

threat! He also produced a forged order from Shuja to kill all infidels. Neither Burnes, who occupied a house in the city, nor Macnaghten was aware of the existence of any serious plot at this period.

Suddenly, on November 2, the storm broke, and Sir Alexander Burnes, his brother Captain Burnes and Captain William Broadfoot were killed and cut to pieces, as were the men of his escort.[1] The mob then sacked the treasury, containing £17,000, which, with the prevailing ineptitude, was kept in a neighbouring house.

Shah Shuja, hearing of the disturbance, despatched a regiment of his Hindustani troops under Campbell (who had re-entered his service), but, entangled in the narrow streets, it was beaten back. Meanwhile Brigadier Shelton at the head of a British force of infantry, with guns, reached the Bala Hissar and covered Campbell's retreat. Apart from this he failed to take the decided action that the situation demanded.

The news of the murders and of the rich loot that had been secured spread far and wide, and thousands of armed Afghans hastened in from every direction. A weak British force was sent out to attack Kabul, but fortunately failed to enter the city, where it would have been cut up. Throughout indecision prevailed and recommendations by the envoy and competent officers were ignored. The curtain had fallen on the first act of the tragedy.

The Capture of the Commissariat Stores.—The envoy had moved from the Residency to the adjacent cantonment, but no effort was made by the military authorities to secure the safety of the supply fort. As was only to be expected, the intervening fort and garden were occupied by Afghans. Since no determined action was taken to expel them nor to reinforce the detachment in the fort, its weak garrison, after a gallant defence, escaped by means of an underground passage — and the supplies were lost to the British. Elsewhere a large quantity of flour was defended by another British officer — and again

[1] For a vivid account of the tragedy vide *Life of Dost Muhammed Khan*, by Mohan Lal, vol. ii, ch. xviii.

he was deserted by Elphinstone and was compelled to evacuate the fort. This completed the second act of the tragedy.

The Fatal Indecision of Elphinstone and Shelton.—The position was now considered to be so serious that a retreat to India was seriously discussed by the military leaders. It seems incredible that Shelton, the only senior officer who was in a position to influence Elphinstone, should have been strongly in favour of this fatal step. Indeed Pottinger, in a letter written to MacGregor, wrote that "we were prevented from going into the Bala Hissar entirely by the obstinacy of Brigadier Shelton".[1]

The Disasters at Charikar and Shekabad.—Among the outlying posts was one at Charikar garrisoned by a Gurkha regiment with Eldred Pottinger as political officer. The treacherous chiefs under the leadership of the Nijrao Chief, known as Mir Masjidi, at a meeting cut down Pottinger's assistant Rattray, and the Charikar post, which had no water-supply under its control, was invested. Finally, after desparate fighting, the post was evacuated by the garrison, which was overcome by lack of water, and only Pottinger and Haughton, both badly wounded, reached the cantonment on November 15. Another post near Ghazni was similarly attacked and the garrison massacred. These disasters increased the atmosphere of gloom which surrounded the General and his advisers, while they naturally encouraged the enemies of the British.

The Despatch of a Brigade to Kabul by Nott.—The Envoy and Elphinstone sent Nott orders, which reached him on November 14, to send a brigade to reinforce Kabul. Although this reduction of force weakened his position considerably, Nott, loyally, but against his better judgment, despatched Maclaren's brigade on November 19. However, owing to a heavy snowfall and the bitter weather in these elevated uplands — Ghazni itself is situated at some 7000 feet above sea level — Maclaren was obliged to return to Kandahar before

[1] Dated Budeabad, January 30, 1842.

reaching Ghazni, and Macnaghten heard, on December 10, that the hoped-for reinforcement would not reach Kabul.

Movements of the Kabul Force.—Shelton, on November 9, was instructed to leave the Bala Hissar and return to the cantonment, which order he carried out without encountering any opposition. Macnaghten had directed Sale to return to Kabul from Gandamak, but that officer, as we have seen, had marched on to Jalalabad. Meanwhile the Afghans, noting the inactivity of the British, began to fire into the cantonment from surrounding positions. Shelton was ordered to capture a fort but the attack was countermanded. Finally it was made and the fort was taken, but not without heavy losses.

Again, an Afghan force, which was shelling the cantonment from the Bemaru hills, was attacked. But Afghan cavalry charged through the British, who fell back on their reserve. Finally, the British again charged and captured the position.

Macnaghten's Negotiations with the Chiefs.—If the Envoy had been entirely misled as to the feelings of the Afghans and had preached peace where there was no peace, at this crisis he proved himself a man of mettle. Elphinstone and Shelton, as we have seen, were strongly in favour of making terms with the Afghans for the evacuation of the country, while Macnaghten, who was attempting to buy off some of the leading Chiefs, advised the occupation of the Bala Hissar. Finally, the military authorities definitely decided against this obvious step and insisted on a retreat to India. The Envoy thereupon drew up a draft treaty by the terms of which, in return for supplies and safeguard, the British would evacuate the whole of Afghanistan.[1]

Akbar Khan had reached Kabul on November 22 and his arrival had strengthened the body of Afghan conspirators. On December 11 Macnaghten met him and other Chiefs and made an agreement on these terms, binding the troops to quit the cantonments in three days' time.

[1] Appendix B.



SIRDAR AKBAR KHAN

The Murder of Macnaghten.—Macnaghten was delaying the execution of the treaty, hoping to save the situation by creating dissension among the avaricious Chiefs. In pursuance of this scheme, on December 23, he, with members of his staff,[1] met Akbar Khan and other Chiefs, without adequate precautions for their safety being taken. Their capture had been decided upon by the Afghans, and Macnaghten, Mackenzie,[2] Trevor and Lawrence were all suddenly seized. The Envoy, while struggling, was shot by Akbar and was then cut to pieces by the fanatical Afghans. Lawrence and Mackenzie were each forced to mount behind a Chief and escaped with their lives, while Trevor, who was also mounted behind a Chief, was hacked to pieces when the horse he was riding stumbled. The curtain thus fell on the third act of the tragedy.

The Attitude of Akbar Khan.—Akbar Khan was undoubtedly the leader of the Afghan Chiefs at this period. It must be remembered that he considered that the Envoy had attempted to deceive him, an opinion which was also held by Pottinger, although not accepted by Lawrence, and he was intensely suspicious of the British. He also, as was but natural, feared that if the column reached Jalalabad intact, the combined forces would be strong enough to defeat his aims. He wished, on this account, to halt the column at Tezin until he had heard that Jalalabad was evacuated. He accordingly, more than once, delayed the march of the column and he entirely failed to supply food, forage or fuel. Indeed, it was probably out of his power to provide for such a multitude, and this he must have known.

On the other hand Eyre, describing the disaster in the Khurd Kabul Pass, writes: "It ought, however, to be mentioned, that several of Akbar's chief adherents, who had preceded the advance, exerted themselves strenuously to keep down the fire; but nothing could

[1] From a letter written by Lady Sale to Lawrence, which I have read, it is clear that Elphinstone had ordered a strong escort and had later cancelled the order.

[2] In Kaye's *op. cit.* vol. ii, p. 422, Captain Mackenzie gives a detailed account of Macnaghten's attempt to enter into negotiations with Akbar, as distinct from the body of confederate chiefs.

restrain the Ghilzais ".[1] Akbar also displayed other good qualities. He obviously liked the British officers, with whom he was brought into contact, admiring the courage with which, when sent to Jalalabad on missions, they loyally returned to captivity, sometimes with messages calculated to enrage him. He saved the lives of all the women and children and of British officers to a number exceeding forty. He presumably considered them to be valuable hostages but, even so, he was hospitable when in a position to be so, and never allowed his prisoners to be ill-treated. Again, when defeated and wounded at the sally of the Jalalabad garrison, he did not, as he was urged to do by the more fanatical chiefs, even contemplate the massacre of his hostages and prisoners. He used the pertinent argument that, if the hostages were killed, vengeance would be taken by the British Government on Dost Muhammad and his family.[2] Finally, it should be remembered that killing men in Afghanistan at that period was not considered a serious matter. Even, in 1899, when I founded the Seistan Consulate, recent killings among the rulers were excused with the remark: "Oh! killing a man in Seistan has no more importance than drinking a glass of water!"

Further Demands by the Chiefs.—On December 24 the Chiefs sent in further demands, which included the surrender of all married officers (including Sale) and their wives, who should be held as hostages until the arrival of Dost Muhammad and other Afghan prisoners, that all guns except six should be handed over and all the money in the treasury. On December 26, encouraging letters from MacGregor at Jalalabad and news from Peshawar that reinforcements were on the way were received. Pottinger, who acted as political officer, warned Shelton and other officers that the Afghans were treacherous and that a great effort should be made to occupy the Bala Hissar or else to fight their way to Jalalabad, but Shelton declared that neither course was

[1] *The Kabul Insurrection of 1841–42*, by Major-General Sir Vincent Eyre, 1879.

[2] For the behaviour of Akbar Khan *vide* also Captain Johnson's Journal quoted in Appendix in vol. ii of Kaye.

practicable. On January 1, 1842, the humiliating treaty was sent in, sealed by eighteen Afghan Chiefs.[1]

The Retreat.—On January 6, 1842, after two months of humiliating indecision unexampled in British military history, the force, consisting of 4500 fighting men with 12,000 followers, marched off from Kabul (which is situated at an elevation of nearly 6000 feet) for Jalalabad, distant 130 miles. The men were dispirited and were becoming demoralized; rations, transport and forage were lacking, while there was snow on the ground. The followers were panic-stricken. During the first march only five miles were covered and the rear-guard, which had been attacked, did not reach the camping ground until 2 A.M.

On the second day another short march was made. Shelton urged that the dangerous Khurd Kabul Pass should be traversed immediately before the Ghilzais had assembled in full force, but Elphinstone, in view of promises of supplies of food and firewood and the exhaustion of the force, decided to halt, intending to march through the pass at night. This plan he was, later, persuaded to abandon.

For the tragedy that followed I quote Vincent Eyre's vivid account: "The rapid effects of two nights' exposure to the frost in disorganizing the force can hardly be conceived. It had so nipped the hands and feet of even the strongest men, as to completely prostrate their powers and incapacitate them for service. . . . In fact only a few hundred serviceable fighting-men remained."[2]

To continue his account: "This truly formidable defile is about five miles from end to end, and is shut in on either hand by a line of lofty hills, between whose precipitous sides the sun at this season could dart but a momentary ray. Down the centre dashed a mountain torrent . . . with thick layers of ice on its edges over which the snow lay consolidated in slippery masses. . . . This stream we had to cross and recross about eight-and-twenty times. . . . A hot fire was opened on the advance,

[1] These treaties are given in full in Appendix B.

[2] *Op. cit.* by Major-General Sir Vincent Eyre, pp. 265-266 and 268.

with whom were several ladies . . . who galloped forward at the head of all running the gauntlet of the enemy's bullets. . . . Lady Sale received a slight wound in the arm. . . . Onward moved the crowd into the thickest of the fire, and fearful was the slaughter that prevailed. An universal panic speedily prevailed, and thousands, seeking refuge in flight, hurried forward to the front, abandoning baggage, arms, ammunition, women and children, regardless for the moment of everything but their own lives."

Heroic acts were performed, but the disaster cost the lives of three thousand men. The survivors, who had ascended to a still colder climate, died in hundreds during the night, while, to intensify their misery, snow fell for several hours.

To push on was the only hope left, but gullible Elphinstone gave the order to halt in view of a message from Akbar Khan that he would provide supplies and escort. During this halt, at the suggestion of Akbar, the women and children, together with the wounded officers, were handed over to his charge. The state of the women, some of whom were pregnant, was deplorable, and the offer was accepted, although doubts were expressed as to the wisdom of the action.[1]

On the morning of January 10 this foolish halt had further incapacitated the force, the European troops alone remaining efficient. The advance was held up, to quote Eyre once again, "in a narrow gorge between the precipitous spurs of two hills. . . . The Afghans securely perched on their point of vantage, commenced the attack, pouring a destructive fire upon the crowded column, as it slowly drew nigh to the fatal spot. . . . The last small remnant of the Native Infantry regiments were here scattered and destroyed, and the public treasure, with all the remaining baggage, fell into the hands of the enemy." The survivors who reached Khak-i-Jabar, five miles beyond the gorge and twenty-nine miles from Kabul, numbered some 200 Europeans; there was also a considerable body of camp-followers.

Akbar Khan again appeared on the scene and, through

[1] Among these wounded officers was Lieutenant Eyre.

Captain Skinner, who had arranged for the women to be handed over to the *Sirdar*, he expressed his regret at the attacks made on the column, due, he stated, to his inability to restrain the Ghilzais. He then offered to save the Europeans on condition that they abandoned the natives. To his credit Elphinstone refused and in the passage down the defile to the Tezin Valley further losses were sustained, but the British remnant fought on heroically.

From Tezin to Jagdalak was a distance of twenty-two miles and by a night march it was hoped to reach that last obstacle before it was occupied by the tribesmen. But ill-fortune dogged the footsteps of the force. At Seh Baba — only seven miles distant — attacks began, the mob of panic-stricken camp-followers almost paralysing the efforts of the few remaining soldiers. At Kattar-Sang — twelve miles from Tezin — constant attacks were made, but Shelton, with his handful of brave men of the 44th regiment, protected the rear. At 3 P.M. Jagdalak was reached where a position was taken up in some ruins. Here, apparently hoping to make terms for the survivors, Elphinstone, Shelton and Johnson visited Akbar and were detained as hostages for the evacuation of Jalalabad.

On January 12 the brave remnant marched on to the Jagdalak Pass, which rises to an elevation of 6420 feet. To quote once again from Vincent Eyre: "This formidable defile is about two miles long, exceedingly narrow, and closed in by precipitous heights. The road has a considerable slope upwards and, on nearing the summit, further progress was found to be obstructed by two strong barriers formed of branches of the prickly holly-oak stretching completely across the defile." Here again the losses were very heavy but there still remained a handful, which included twenty officers and forty-five British soldiers, struggling on towards Gandamak.

To save themselves from an attack in the open, this small body quitted the road and took up a position on a height to the left, where they determined to sell their lives dearly. At this last stand, they could only raise twenty muskets with two rounds of ammunition per musket. Some Afghan horsemen coming from the direc-

tion of Gandamak were beckoned to and, at the invitation of their chiefs, Major Charles Griffiths, who had distinguished himself throughout the retreat, descended the hill to parley. It was agreed that the party should receive terms, but, before this information reached the men on the hill, an Afghan attempted to snatch a musket from a soldier, who shot him. The Afghans thereupon killed the British, who fought to the death.

During the Second Afghan War, Major Waller,[1] a grandson of Griffiths, collecting the bones and relics, built a cairn over them, on what is known as "Forty-fourth Hill".

Another small party had pushed on ahead, six of whom arrived at Fatehabad, sixteen miles from Jalalabad, but Dr. Brydon alone of this pitiful remnant struggled into Jalalabad to announce the disaster.[2] Thus fell the curtain on the fourth act of the tragedy.

Summary.—Looking back on the First Afghan War, a century later, it would appear that too serious a view of the disastrous retreat from Kabul was taken, not only in India but also in Great Britain. It was a disaster that was discreditable not only to Auckland and to the military and political authorities at Kabul, but in a lesser degree to Sale, who, in the first place, failed to capture Tezin and who, in the second place, quitting Gandamak with his powerful force, made no attempt to attack the hostile tribesmen, while the Kabul column was being overwhelmed in the neighbouring pass.

It is, however, reasonable to hold the opinion that, had the column marched off in November, it would have fought its way through the passes, perhaps with heavy casualties and with the loss of part of its baggage, but without complete disaster. It was the paralysing results of the intense cold in mid-winter which clearly destroyed the fighting value of the troops. It is also fair to quote Rawlinson, who writes: "If we except, indeed, the fatal winter of 1841–42, when by the strangest concatenation

[1] He was a brother of Frances Tezeena Waller, whose birth is recorded in the next chapter.

[2] Two other Europeans and a number of natives straggled in during the month.

of accidents, our forces at Kabul had become completely demoralized, there never was an occasion on which the Afghans could stand for an hour against British soldiers or Indian Sepoys ".[1] Yet again, Afghanistan was not evacuated. Resolute Nott firmly maintained his position in the Kandahar area by hard fighting, while Sale at Jalalabad, as we shall see, entirely defeated Akbar Khan's utmost efforts.

[1] *England and Russia in the East*, pp. 184-185.

CHAPTER XXXII

RETRIBUTION

Follow after — we are waiting, by the trails that we lost,
For the sounds of many footsteps, for the tread of a host.
Follow after — follow after — for the harvest is sown:
By the bones about the wayside, ye shall come to your own.

KIPLING.

Lord Auckland's Indecision.—The news of the disaster, which proved to Auckland that he had been entirely misled, was a terrible blow and, at first, he gave way to despair,[1] as is shown by his message to the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Jasper Nicolls: " I am coming fast to the opinion that our furthest point of support in advance must be Ferozepore, and that we must bear the disgrace and disadvantage of retiring to this frontier with as little of loss as may now be assured ".[2] His state of mind was such that he merely wished to despatch an insufficient force in the shape of a single brigade, with orders to march to Jalalabad, entirely ignoring the necessity for the vindication of our military power in Afghanistan. However, independent action was taken by the Agent at Peshawar and by George Clerk, the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces, and, on January 4, 1842, a second brigade crossed the Sutlej on its march to Peshawar. Nicolls, it should be stated, was opposed to these forward movements, an opposition which certainly did not redound to his credit.

The Failure of Brigadier Wild.—During this period Wild had reached Peshawar with four Indian regiments, but was totally unprovided with artillery. General Avita-

[1] In addition to previous authorities, I have consulted the *Cambridge History of India* vol. v, ch. xxviii.

[2] Kaye gives a clear account of Auckland's unheroic attitude and in his appendix quotes from his various letters. *Op. cit.* vol. iii, pp. 405-406. *Vide* also Durand's scathing criticism, *op. cit.* ch. xxviii.

bile, the Italian Governor of the Peshawar district, provided four rickety guns, manned by Sikh artillerymen, and promised that his Sikhs, who regarded the warlike guardians of the rugged Khaibar with deep apprehension, would proceed as far as Ak Masjid.

On January 15 half the brigade marched on Ak Masjid without encountering opposition, but, by a most unfortunate error, their supply column never arrived. Wild attempted to follow on January 20, but the Sikhs mutinied and he was defeated and wounded. As a result, Ak Masjid was perforce evacuated and the brigade fell back on Jamrud.

The Arrival of General George Pollock at Peshawar.—General Pollock, who had been commissioned to relieve Jalalabad, reached Peshawar in February. There he found a disheartened force prostrate with malaria and realized that until the arrival of the British troops, for which he pressed, it was out of the question to advance, in spite of the appeals he received from Sale. He consequently remained at Peshawar, raising the *moral* of the Indian troops by constant visits to their hospital, and making carefully thought-out plans for his advance.

Lord Ellenborough appointed Governor-General.—In October 1841, upon the fall of the Whig Ministry and the assumption by Sir Robert Peel of the premiership, Lord Ellenborough, who had served as President of the Board of Control for several years, was appointed to supersede Auckland. He reached Calcutta on February 28, 1842, and in his despatch to Nicolls, of March 15, laid down that: " Faced by the universal hostility of the Afghan people, which had assumed a religious as well as a national character, it was clear that to recover Afghanistan, if it were possible, would constitute a source of weakness rather than of strength in case of an invasion from the west, and that the ground upon which the present policy rested had ceased to exist ". He further observed that " whatever course was to be taken, rested entirely on military considerations. In the first instance regard to the safety of the various garrisons . . . and finally, to the re-establishment of our military reputation

by the infliction of some signal and decisive blow upon the Afghans, which may make it appear to them, to our own subjects and to our allies, that we have the power of inflicting punishment upon those who commit atrocities and violate their faith, and that we withdraw ultimately from Afghanistan, not from any deficiency of means to maintain our position but because we are satisfied that the King we have set up has not, as we were erroneously led to imagine, the support of the nation over which he has been placed."

The Siege of Jalalabad.—When Brydon announced the disaster in person on January 13, George Broadfoot,[1] the engineer officer, pointed out to Sale that, unless he was prepared to hold Jalalabad to the last, he should evacuate the city immediately and fight his way through the Khaibar to Peshawar.

Sale decided to remain at Jalalabad and Broadfoot set to work to restore the ruined defences, while foraging parties were sent out to secure supplies of wood and grass. Caravans from Peshawar had opportunely brought three months' supply of wheat. To lessen the hostile population, all the Afghans in the city, including 200 men of a *Jezailchi* regiment, were expelled.

Early in January a letter from Akbar to a neighbouring Chief, which called upon the Faithful, in the name of the Prophet, to fight the infidels, was intercepted. In this despatch Akbar boasted of having killed Macnaghten with his own hands.

The failure of Wild's brigade to penetrate the Khaibar on January 20 appalled Sale. With the assistance of MacGregor, he drew up a scheme for the evacuation of Jalalabad, and on January 26 summoned a Council of War to approve of his proposals. This document purported to be a reply to Shuja, who had written to MacGregor: "Your people have concluded a treaty with us. You are still at Jalalabad. What are your intentions? Tell us quickly." Shuja had also stated that if supplied with money he could hold the country for the British Government.

[1] Vide *The Career of Major George Broadfoot*, by Major W. Broadfoot, 1888.

MacGregor declared that in his opinion and also in that of Sale the British Government could not relieve the Jalalabad garrison. He went on to say that Shuja desired their departure from Afghanistan and that it was their duty to treat with him for the evacuation of the country. The terms proposed were that the British were to give four hostages in proof of their sincerity; and that Shuja should send a force to escort them to Peshawar with their arms, guns, etc., intact. Other provisions included the supply of transport and foodstuffs, the withdrawal of Akbar from the scene, and finally, that Afghan hostages should be handed over to the British.

So far from this precious document being nominally a reply to Shuja, it was virtually an attempt to treat with Akbar, and Broadfoot, on reading it, flung it from him in disgust. A scene of intense excitement followed. The majority were in favour of the proposal and Broadfoot could only secure an adjournment of the Council. On the following day the subject was again hotly debated and the terms of the proposed capitulation were carried with the exception that it was decided that no hostages should be given.

The document was despatched to the Shah and, in due course, the answer came that to prove their sincerity the senior officers should seal it. Broadfoot now claimed that the doubt that had been expressed of their sincerity liberated them from their obligations and proposed that the whole question should be reconsidered. Finally, it was decided to end the negotiations and to hold Jalalabad. "And thus", to quote Durand, "the firmness of one man, and he nearly the junior in the Council of War, preserved his country's arms from suffering another deep and disgraceful blow."

On February 19 an earthquake destroyed the newly erected fortifications of Jalalabad, and the risk of an attack by Akbar, who had collected a considerable force and was investing the city, was considerable. Afghans, however, dislike attacking forts — they possessed but little artillery — and through the energy of the garrison, which was cheered by the publication of the Government

manifesto of January 31,[1] the defences were speedily rebuilt.

On April 6, urged on by Captain Henry Havelock, Sale somewhat unwillingly attacked the Afghans at daybreak. The artillery directed a heavy fire on their centre, while the infantry broke through it. The Afghans fired from a battery screened by a garden wall, but the British would not be denied; the guns which had been lost by the Kabul force were recaptured; the camp was burned; and the defeat of Akbar, who was wounded, was complete.

The Position at Kandahar.—To turn to the position in the south, Nott held his own during the winter. Money was very scarce and reinforcements with fresh supplies under General England were eagerly awaited. On February 21 a letter from Elphinstone and Pottinger, which had been written some two months previously, was received, ordering the evacuation of Kandahar and Kalat-i-Ghilzai. Nott and Rawlinson did not consider this letter in any way binding, but the astute Durrani Chiefs, fully aware of the situation, demanded the evacuation of the British force, on the ground that Shah Shuja no longer required their services. Failing their withdrawal, they threatened the British with the fate of the Kabul column. To add to the difficulties of the situation at this juncture, Prince Timur received a letter from Shuja which ran: "You must understand that the disturbances which you have, no doubt, heard of at Kabul, have been a contest between the followers of Islam and the unbelievers. Now that the affair is decided, all the Afghans have tendered their allegiance to me and recognized me as King. . . ." Rawlinson pronounced this letter to be genuine.

Nott replied to the Chiefs that there was every reason to believe that Shuja's letter was written under compulsion, that he was awaiting instructions from his Government and that a British army was on its way to avenge the murder of the envoy. All doubts as to British policy were temporarily set at rest by the receipt of a

[1] *Vide* Kaye, *op. cit.* vol. iii. pp. 27 and 407.

copy of an official letter, dated January 28, in which the continued occupation of Kandahar was enjoined. On March 3 Rawlinson took the step of expelling the Afghan inhabitants, to the number of 5000, from the city.

The Durranis nearly capture Kandahar.—On March 7 Nott attacked the Durranis, who retreated and then doubled back on Kandahar. They attacked with fanatical fury and, when the Herat Gate was burned, their success seemed probable. However, a solid rampart of sacks of grain was formed and held, in spite of repeated charges by *Ghazis*, careless of life. Finally, the attack was repelled with the loss of some 600 *Ghazis*. Nott, later in the month, again attacked and defeated the Durranis.

The Fall of Ghazni.—The Durrani Chiefs, who were much dejected by these defeats, recovered their courage upon hearing of the capture of Ghazni. The townspeople had admitted the attacking force and the garrison, 400 strong, was shut up in the citadel. With half rations and with practically no forage or water, Colonel Palmer made a treaty with the enemy by which the British were to be conducted in safety to Peshawar. Treachery was, however, intended, as indeed might have been expected, and the force was surrounded and, after surrender, was massacred. The fall of Ghazni on March 6 was considered to constitute a discreditable disaster, as, had Palmer expelled the population, he would have secured supplies and, in any case, he should have maintained control of the water-supply.

The Movements of General England.—Fortunately Kalat-i-Ghilzai defeated all attacks, and the advance of England in March with his convoy of treasure, ammunition and medicines was reported. Nott was pressed by Rawlinson to despatch a force to co-operate with him at the Khojak Pass but refused to do so. England with his advance body was met with a heavy fire from the defenders of a position at Hykulzai near the entrance to the Khojak Pass, and was repulsed. His officers begged him to renew the attack but, grossly overestimating the enemy force, he retreated to Quetta.

A month later England again attacked the position

at Hykulzai, this time with complete success. Entering the Khojak Pass, its heights were crowned by the Kandahar troops and the united brigades on May 10 entered Kandahar. There news of the relief of Jalalabad by General Pollock was celebrated by firing a royal salute.

Ellenborough's statesmanlike declaration of March 15, sad to say, was followed by a complete *volte-face*, owing to the check received by England and, on April 19, Nott was instructed to withdraw the garrison of Kalat-i-Ghilzai and to evacuate Kandahar. He was then to take up a position at Quetta " until the season may enable you to retire upon Sukkur ". Much against his own judgment, Nott decided to carry out the first part of his instructions, but he was unable to march back to India without collecting a considerable amount of fresh transport — a matter of months for so large a force.

The Defence of Kalat-i-Ghilzai.—On May 19 a brigade was despatched to evacuate the garrison of Kalat-i-Ghilzai. Information as to this movement, which naturally encouraged them, had reached the Ghilzais, who determined to storm the fort before the arrival of the relieving column. At the false dawn, on May 21, 4000 men provided with scaling ladders made a desperate assault. Three times they reached the crest of the works only to be repulsed with very heavy losses by the defenders, not one of whom was killed. Upon the arrival of the relieving brigade the fort was destroyed and the garrison was withdrawn to Kandahar.

The Battle outside Kandahar.—On May 29 the Duranis under Aktur Khan, who attempted to deceive Rawlinson by constant overtures for peace, made a general attack on Kandahar, but were defeated with heavy loss. They had intended, as in the Second Afghan War, to hold the Baba Wali Pass which they had blocked, but the rapid action of the British upset their plans. Information as to the orders received by the British to evacuate Kandahar had reached them and was mainly responsible for these continued hostilities.

The Last Days of Shah Shuja.—Some days after the

murder of Burnes, the rebel leaders invited Shuja to continue to rule, stipulating, however, that he should give his daughters in marriage to the leaders. This condition Shuja at first agreed to, but later refused to carry out.

The influence of Akbar Khan was enormously increased by the destruction of the British force, albeit the older Chiefs were jealous of him. Although Shuja wrote to Sale demanding the evacuation of Jalalabad, his position was really a very weak one. Accordingly he ostensibly accepted the proposal of *Nawab* Zaman Khan Muhammadzai (who had been appointed King by the conspirators, after Shuja's refusal to give his daughters to the Chiefs) to become his Vizier.

At this period Zaman Khan was guarding the British prisoners, whom he refused to hand over to the Shah. Meanwhile Akbar was pressing Shuja to prove his sincerity by joining him before Jalalabad with his troops and artillery, and this, after much hesitation, Shuja decided to do. On April 5 he left the Bala Hissar with a small escort in order to join his army, which was encamped close by. On the way he was murdered by Shuja-ud-Dola, son of Zaman Khan.

Thus fell Shah Shuja. There is much divergence of opinion as to his fidelity to the British. There is no doubt that many of his courtiers were hostile to us, and perhaps it would be safe to say that he was an opportunist who trimmed his sails to suit the prevailing wind, but always realized that we had the power of the purse.

Ferrier, who was in close touch with Afghans some years later, sums up as follows: " If he always failed, it was because he never would permit the smallest entrenchment upon his absolute rights. . . . His conduct during his second reign is a proof of that independence of character which was ever his misfortune: indignant under the yoke imposed upon him by the English, all the vices of his Afghan nature broke forth; he betrayed his benefactors, resisted his liberators, and died by the hands of assassins — for an Afghan he could have no more glorious close to such a career." [1]

[1] *History of the Afghans*, p. 363.

The Difficulties of General Pollock.—Among the chief difficulties of Pollock was the doubtful attitude of the Sikhs. They had, as we have seen, mutinied under Wild, but the arrival of large reinforcements of British troops with artillery, the tact of the general himself and the influence of Captain Mackeson had restored their *moral*, as had appeals to their honour to wipe out the disgrace which the *Khalsa* had suffered from the mutiny. The Afridis, in return for money payments, had agreed to hold the Khaibar, but upon the appearance of Akbar with 800 men at Ak Masjid, they pleaded their inability to perform their agreement.[1]

The Forcing of the Khaibar Pass.—Pollock was a great organizer and left nothing to chance. Before dawn on April 5, the army marched into the pass and the troops immediately scaled its precipitous heights. The Afridis, who were surprised by the movement, offered little opposition at first and, thanks to skilled leadership and their own gallantry, the British were able to drive the enemy before them.

When this difficult feat had been achieved, the centre column advanced to the barrier that had been erected in the pass, which was destroyed, its defenders being scattered by shrapnel, and the huge convoy,[2] which included supplies and munitions for Jalalabad, marched safely up the pass. Suffering alike from heat and from thirst, the slow-moving column finally reached Ak Masjid, distant some seven miles from the mouth of the pass; the fort had been evacuated by Akbar early in the day.

Pollock had forced the Khaibar. Avitabile, it is to be noted, considered that he was going to certain destruction, and this opinion was perhaps held by the Sikhs, who had followed another and more circuitous route. They were attacked by the tribesmen and suffered some casualties, but undoubtedly lessened the resistance offered to the British column which they finally rejoined at Ak Masjid.

[1] In addition to previous authorities, I have consulted *The Life of Sir George Pollock*, by C. R. Low.

[2] Pollock had insisted on all ranks discarding heavy baggage, and only had one small tent for himself and a staff officer.

Pollock wrote to a friend: " There were many desertions among the Indian troops before we advanced. Now they are in the highest spirits, and have a thorough contempt for the enemy. . . . The Sikhs are encamped near us and are much more respectful and civil since our operations of yesterday." [1] The British casualties were slight, while those of the tribesmen were very heavy.

The Relief of Jalalabad.—Pollock's repulse of the Afridi tribesmen, coming after the signal defeat of Akbar, swept away all serious opposition. He halted on April 6 and, by April 8, he had marched to Lundi Kotal, some ten miles farther on, and then proceeded to Dakka, twelve miles from the pass. On April 18 Jalalabad was reached, where the garrison warmly welcomed the relieving force.[2]

The Instructions of Ellenborough.—In spite of the success of Sale and of Pollock, Ellenborough's mercurial spirit was daunted by the surrender of Palmer at Ghazni and the check suffered by England. He accordingly abandoned his declared policy and gave orders in direct opposition to it. He seems to have forgotten the prisoners whom he was in honour bound to release. He also now doubted the expediency of undertaking operations merely for the re-establishment of our military reputation. Nicolls, who appears to little advantage, acting on the Governor-General's pusillanimous wishes, instructed Pollock, on April 29, to withdraw every British soldier to Peshawar. " The only circumstances ", he added, " which can authorise delay in obeying this order are: 1st. That you have brought a negotiation for the release of the prisoners lately confined at Badiabad to such a point that you might risk its happy accomplishment by withdrawing. 2ndly. That you may have attached a lightly equipped force to rescue them. 3rdly. That the enemy at Kabul may be moving to attack you. In this improbable case, should any respectable number of troops have descended into the plain below Jagdalak with that intent, it would be most advisable to inflict

[1] Low, *op. cit.* p. 262.

[2] In Low's *op. cit.* pp. 270-277, a spirited account of the march is given.

such a blow upon them as to make them long remember your parting effort."

The Reply of General Pollock.—On May 13 Pollock gave an admirable reply to these unworthy instructions. To quote from it: "With regard to our withdrawal at the present moment, I fear that it would have the very worst effect — it would be construed into a defeat, and our character as a powerful nation would be entirely lost in this part of the world".

Later on he writes: "But the advance on Kabul would require that General Nott should act in concert and advance also. I therefore cannot help regretting that he should be directed to retire, which, without some demonstration of our power, he will find some difficulty in doing."[1] Pollock then declared that he could not retire to Peshawar without additional transport, and this delay, as we shall see, gave temperamental Ellenborough time to change his mind once again.

It is of considerable importance to learn that Pollock, on receiving these instructions, wrote to Nott requesting him on no account to retire, as directed by his superiors, until he should hear from him again. He realized that he endangered his commission by this act, but he felt that co-operation, combined with delay, would result in success.[2] Stout-hearted Nott readily agreed to Pollock's request.

The Mission of Captain Colin Mackenzie.—On April 25 Mackenzie reached the British camp with proposals from Akbar, who wished to arrange terms for himself and his party. Pollock replied, offering payment for the release of the prisoners, but would not entertain Akbar's extravagant proposals.

Ellenborough's fresh Orders to the Generals.—Fortunately, as it would appear, the inglorious orders of Ellenborough had leaked out and caused a storm of disapproval both in India and at home. They also reacted unfavourably on the position in Afghanistan. The Governor-General, influenced by public opinion, thereupon issued fresh orders to both generals.

[1] This letter is given in full by Kaye, vol. iii, pp. 198-200. [2] Low, *op. cit.* p. 297.

During the summer months Pollock was not inactive. In June he despatched a force to the Shinwari Valley, where a captured gun, treasure and plunder had been collected. By way of punishment for their guilt, of which ample proofs were forthcoming, the villages in the valley were burned and the crops were carried off.

On July 4 Ellenborough wrote direct to the two generals, stating that his opinions had undergone no change since his declaration that the withdrawal of the British troops from Afghanistan was the main object of Government. But he laid down that if Nott wished to retire to India *via* Ghazni, Kabul and Jalalabad, he might be assisted in this retirement by Pollock's advance to Kabul. The letters are given by Low.[1] That to Nott included the following: "If you should be enabled by a *coup de main* to get possession of Ghazni and Kabul you will act as you see fit, and leave decisive proof of the power of the British army, without impeaching its humanity. You will bring away from the tomb of Mahmud of Ghazni his club which hangs over it, and you will bring away the gates of his tomb, which are the gates of Somnath. These will be the just trophies of your success."

Kaye's opinion of this document runs: "It is either from first to last a masterpiece of Jesuitical cunning, or it indicates a feebleness of will — an infirmity of purpose — discreditable to the character of a statesman entrusted with the welfare and honour of one of the greatest empires in the world". Studying the question a century later, I feel bound to concur in this condemnation of Ellenborough.

The Advance of Pollock to Gandamak.—In the middle of August Pollock heard from Nott that he was preparing to march on Kabul. Consequently, on August 20, he sent his advanced guard to Gandamak and, three days later, it attacked two neighbouring villages, where a hostile force had collected. Not without some loss the villages were taken and the tribesmen dispersed. During the halt at Gandamak, on September 1, the unfortunate Fath Jang, who had been elected puppet King of Kabul

[1] *Op. cit.* vol. iii, pp. 328-329.

by the *Sirdars*, rode in to claim British protection, only too happy to have escaped with his life.

On September 8 the British force in two columns (with General McCaskill [1] marching one day behind) entered the Jagdalak Pass, which was very strongly held by Ghilzai tribesmen. But the British, fired by the spirit of retribution, attacked with a determination that nothing could withstand. The victory was complete. The force then marched on to Tezin, where, owing to the fatigued condition of the transport, a day's halt was ordered.

Meanwhile Akbar, who realized the seriousness of his position, attempted to delay the British advance by a letter which never reached Pollock. He had, at first, decided to hold the Khurd Kabul Pass, but, encouraged by Pollock's halt which he attributed to fear, he moved on to Tezin.

The Battle of Tezin.—On September 13 Akbar made his supreme effort. The valley was surrounded by high hills, each of which was held in force. The action opened by the Afghan cavalry being attacked and cut up by the 3rd Dragoons. The British infantry then climbed the heights. Realizing that their muskets were outranged by the *jezails*, they everywhere charged with bayonets fixed. Desperate were the efforts made by the Afghans to hold the Haft Kotal, but thoughts of the massacre, of which ghastly evidence was still visible on the march, made Pollock's force, British and Indians alike, careless of everything but vengeance. Finally the heights of the Haft Kotal were secured and the Afghans dispersed and fled to their homes, realizing that they were beaten on their own mountains. On September 15 the victorious British reached Kabul without further opposition.

Nott marches North.—To return to the situation at Kandahar: during July Nott, who had received a large supply of camels from Quetta, was preparing to retire to India. Suddenly, on July 20, Ellenborough's letter of July 4, which permitted him on his own responsibility to "retreat" from Kandahar *via* Kabul, reached him. In reply to it he wrote to the Governor-General that he had

[1] His daughter married Sir Henry Durand.

decided to retire a portion of the army *via* Ghazni and Kabul.

On August 9 Nott commenced his march on Kabul with a strong column which included two batteries of artillery, and the 40th and 41st foot, with five Bengal battalions and some cavalry. England at the same time retired to India with the Bombay regiments and the Shah's army.

The Battle of Ghoaine, August 30.—During the first marches the British were undisturbed, but information was received that Shams-ud-Din Khan, the Governor of Ghazni, with some 500 horsemen and 2 guns, was in the neighbourhood. On August 28 the force had started to advance from Mukur, when the rear-guard was attacked, but the irregular cavalry cut up and dispersed the assailants. Upon reaching the camping-ground a haze prevented effectual reconnoitring and, upon receipt of a false report that the grass-cutters had been attacked, some cavalry galloped out and dispersed a body of footmen. A force of Afghan horse appearing on a ridge was then charged, but our horsemen fell into an ambush and were received by a hot flanking fire causing heavy losses. They were then, in turn, charged and defeated by the Afghan horse. Hearing of this repulse, Nott marched out to fight the enemy, reported to be 7000 strong, but only their vedettes were visible on the hill-tops.

Shams-ud-Din Khan attacks the British.—On the following day Shams-ud-Din had sent round the heads of the three British officers who had been killed, and declared that one of them was Nott's. The Ghilzais, much encouraged by these proofs of success, resolved to fight.

Nott marched towards Ghoaine, while the Afghan leader kept parallel to his right and finally took up his position in the hills to the east of the camp. After resting his force, Nott determined to capture an adjacent fort which was held by the enemy, but seeing the British artillery make little impression on it, Shams-ud-Din advanced in full force. Nott thereupon drew off from the attack on the fort and charged the Afghans, who fled. Their guns and camp were captured.

Nott's Advance on Ghazni.—On September 5 Nott's army was before Ghazni. Shams-ud-Din was holding the surrounding heights, which Nott proceeded to clear and then camped. The famous Ghazni gun, the *Zubbur Jang*, was, however, fired from the fortress and fourteen balls fell in the camp, which was accordingly moved out of range. Pollock ordered the construction of breaching batteries, but they were not required, since Shams-ud-Din fled to Kabul and the defenders of the fortress evacuated it by night.

Nott enters Ghazni.—In the morning the British flag was hoisted from the tower of the citadel; a royal salute was fired from the captured Afghan guns and the fortress was destroyed in retribution for the treacherous massacre of the British garrison. Finally, Pollock carried out Ellenborough's instructions by loading up the gates of the shrine of Mahmud of Ghazni and then continued his march.

Nott reaches the Kabul Valley.—On September 4, when camping some twenty-five miles south of Kabul, Nott received information of Pollock's victory at Tezin and of his intention to reach the capital on September 15. The Kandahar force was opposed by a strong body of Afghans who, under Shams-ud-Din and Sultan Jan, had thrown up earthworks in the Maidan Pass. The defence was stout and the heights were carried although not held. The action was indecisive, but that night news of the defeat of Akbar at Tezin reached the Afghans, who decided to retreat to a position at Urgundeh. In the morning the Maidan Pass was found to have been abandoned, but the tribesmen harassed the column with *jezail* fire. Nott, however, crushed all opposition and, destroying the villages as he advanced, camped some five miles from Kabul. He had been beaten in the race by Pollock, but his advance had attracted strong forces which otherwise would have joined Akbar's army.

The Captives.—Lady Sale[1] mentions that before

[1] *Lady Sale's Journal*, p. 227. I have also consulted *Forty-three Years in India*, by Sir George Lawrence, and have read letters of interest which were received from Lady Sale and General Pollock. These were lent me by Major-General Sir William Beynon, the grandson of Sir George Lawrence.

starting on the tragic retreat, by chance she opened Campbell's *Poems* at " Hohenlinden ", " one verse of which ", she writes, " actually haunted me day and night ":

> Few, few shall part where many meet,
> The snow shall be their winding sheet;
> And every turf beneath their feet
> Shall be a soldier's sepulchre.

In the previous chapter the handing over of the women and children is mentioned. With the exception of Lady Macnaghten they had lost everything except the clothes they wore, and, for the last four days, had tasted nothing but some dry biscuits and some sherry or brandy. Lawrence, however, writes: " During the whole of these trying marches, I felt truly proud of my countrymen and women; all bore up so nobly and heroically against hunger, cold, fatigue, and other privations of no ordinary kind, as to call forth the admiration even of our Afghan guards ".

The March to the Panjshir Valley.—The captives remained for the night in the Khurd Kabul fort and on the following day proceeded to Tezin. Lady Sale, who had been twice wounded in the Khurd Kabul Pass, writes: " The road was covered with awfully mangled bodies, all naked: fifty-eight Europeans were counted . . . the natives innumerable. . . . The sight was dreadful; the smell of the blood sickening; and the corpses lay so thick. . . ."

Lawrence, who had been claimed as a hostage, took charge of the party, and describes in similar terms the onward march through the Jagdalak Pass, beyond which the captives turned north across a steep range to the village of Tigri, situated in the Panjshir Valley. There, to a congregation numbering 100 British men, women and children, he read the appallingly appropriate psalm for the day: " O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance. . . . The dead bodies of Thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the air."

Tigri, being an undefended village, was not considered safe and, accordingly, the party moved on to the

fortified village of Budiabad, where reasonably comfortable quarters were provided. On February 11, the earthquake that had levelled the walls of Jalalabad wrought havoc also at Budiabad, but fortunately no lives were lost.

On April 11, after a false start and a return, the captives finally left Budiabad, passing on the way Akbar Khan, who carried his wounded hand in a sling. "He spoke in a free and soldierly manner of Sale's victory and his own defeat, praising the gallant bearing of our men, with Sale conspicuous on his white charger at their head."

On April 19 the party reached the Tezin fort, which had suffered badly from the earthquake, and here the fourth child was born since leaving Kabul.[1] The captives then moved to Goudah, some twelve miles from Tezin, and at this camp, on April 23, General Elphinstone died.

Lady Sale's diary, under date of May 11, breathes her indomitable spirit: "The citizens [of Kabul] are ruined by the perfect stagnation of trade. . . . Now is the time to strike the blow, but I much dread dilly-dallying just because a handful of us are in Akbar's power. What are *our* lives when compared with the honour of our country?" From this camp, on May 23, the captives travelled to the Haft Kotul; "and here", Lady Sale writes, "we came upon a sad scene of decaying bodies". They then halted once again at the Khurd Kabul fort.

During this trying period, Pottinger who, as political officer, had to deal with Akbar, made the best of a very difficult situation and urged the *Sirdar* to give a proof of his sincerity by sending the women and children to Jalalabad. Akbar, had he been free to decide, might have agreed, but the other Chiefs would have opposed the step, considering the hostages to be a gold mine.

Hearing that the Chiefs of the Jabbar Khel, among whom they were camped, intended to seize them, on May 22 a hurried march was made to a fort at Shewaki close to Kabul, the party covering forty miles of rough country in two days. Here they were in comparative luxury. Captain Connolly, who had joined the prisoners, received a letter from Pollock at Jalalabad dated July 4, in

[1] She was aptly named Frances Tezeena Waller.

which the General stated that he had a force of 20,000 men at Jalalabad and that Nott's division was 15,000 strong. He added that 25,000 men were assembling at Ferozepore, and that 10,000 men were on their way from England. He concluded: " All will make an overwhelming army and it will be a fearful day if such an army advance for the release of our prisoners and the delivery of our guns". While the captives were at Shewaki, Colonel Palmer and his officers, nine in all, arrived in a pitiable condition from Ghazni and joined the rest of the prisoners.

On August 25 Akbar decided to despatch the party to Bamian under a strong escort, so determined was he to prevent their rescue by the advancing armies. Reports of Nott's march on Ghazni had alarmed him. Indeed, before the arrival of the prisoners at Bamian, the fall of that fortress was announced. The crossing of the high passes was very trying, especially for the sick, but finally the Bamian Valley was reached, when the prisoners, forgetting their troubles, visited and sketched the wonderful Buddhist remains.

On September 11, Saleh Muhammad, the officer in command of the escort, received Akbar's orders, to move the prisoners to still more distant Khulm. At this juncture Saleh Muhammad's brother, accompanied by a *Sayyid* Murtaza, arrived from Kabul. From a friend of the British they bore proposals to which the wife of Saleh Muhammad had already been won over, that that officer should arrange for the liberation of the captives in return for handsome sums of money. He was informed that Akbar had fled, and that the Kizilbash had joined the British. Consequently he was ready to accept the very generous terms of 20,000 rupees in cash to be paid on arrival at Kabul, and an annuity of 12,000 rupees for life. Having decided to join the winning side, Saleh Muhammad hoisted the standard of defiance on the walls of the fort, and, before sunset, it was known that the British had engaged his services.

Pottinger, to whom the greatest credit is due for these successful negotiations, in which he was ably

seconded by Lawrence, immediately issued a proclamation to the neighbouring Hazaras to tender their allegiance, with the result that various Chiefs joined the British. The representative of Akbar fled and a known friend of the British took his place as Governor. Meanwhile money, which was very scarce, was obtained from a passing caravan.

The Happy Ending to the Captivity.—On September 16 the party, fearing that they might be attacked at any moment, started on their march back to Kabul. To some extent the arrival of Sir Richmond Shakespear at the head of a force of Kizilbash cavalry, allayed their anxiety. But there were strong bodies of enemy in the Kuhistan, and Shakespear urged the captives to make long marches, until they were met by Sale, whose brigade was holding the pass. To quote his heroic wife for the last time: "When we arrived where the infantry were posted they cheered all the captives as they passed them, and the men of the 13th pressed forward to welcome us individually. . . . On our arrival at the camp at Siah Sang we were greeted with a salute of twenty-one guns."

The Reoccupation of Kabul, and its Punishment.—On September 16 Pollock marched in triumph through Kabul to the Bala Hissar, where he hoisted the British flag. Fath Jang was recognised as King, but it was clearly pointed out to him that he could expect no assistance from the British in men, money or arms. His position was, needless to say, an impossible one.

Pollock had been instructed that a signal act of retribution should fall on guilty Kabul. He realized that if the Bala Hissar were destroyed, there would be even less chance than at present existed for the restoration of law and order in Afghanistan. He therefore decided to blow up the main bazaar in which the mutilated corpse of Macnaghten had been exhibited. But anxious to keep the retribution within reasonable bounds, he sent a strong detachment of British troops to protect the inhabitants from plunder and outrage. However, upon the sound of the explosions being heard, "the cry went forth", to quote Rawlinson, "that Kabul was given up

to plunder. Both camps rushed into the city, and the consequence has been the almost total destruction of the town."

These excesses are to be deplored, but when we consider that the sòldiers and the camp-followers had been eye-witnesses of the massacres perpetrated alike on soldiers and non-combatants, the fact that the guilty city lay at their mercy and the rumour that it was to be plundered, feelings of vengeance, which cannot be severely blamed, would naturally be aroused.

The Last Expedition.—In order to discourage an attack on his troops in the Khurd Kabul Pass, Pollock, who had heard that Amanulla Khan had collected a strong force at Istalif in the Kuhistan district and that Akbar Khan, after sending his family across the Hindu Kush into Turkistan, was waiting on events in the same neighbourhood, decided to take action. By his orders McCaskill attacked this "maiden" fortress, with complete success. Nothing could check the gallantry of the troops, who stormed through village and vineyard with such a rush that the defenders of Istalif were seized with panic, and the hillside beyond was covered with men and white-veiled women fleeing from the town. McCaskill, with true British gallantry, allowed no pursuit, but two guns and much booty fell to the victors.

On his return McCaskill destroyed Charikar, the scene of the annihilation of the Gurkha regiment. He then marched back in triumph to Kabul, having inflicted a heavy blow on Afghan pride and *moral* by the capture of Istalif, with such consummate ease.

The Victorious Armies march back to India.—British honour had been fully vindicated by the recovery of the hostages and captives, by victories that crushed all opposition in the field and by the punishment inflicted on the guilty cities. Its task was accomplished. On October 12 the army began its march homewards, taking with it the blind Zaman Shah, the youthful Fath Jang and their families. It was also accompanied by the Indian survivors of the retreat who had, in some cases, been enslaved, and who were treated with every care and

consideration. Halting at Jalalabad, Pollock destroyed its fortifications, as he also did at Ak Masjid. He then marched down the Khaibar to Peshawar, where the army was welcomed with princely hospitality by Avitabile. Finally it marched across the Punjab to Ferozepore.

The Victory Celebrations.—The victorious army was greeted by Ellenborough, and crossing the Sutlej by a temporary bridge, it marched between 250 caparisoned elephants, and was welcomed with booming of guns, military music and heartfelt rejoicings. Festivities followed, which culminated in a grand military display. Ellenborough dubbed Sale's brigade the "Illustrious Garrison". He might with at least equal justice have termed Nott's command "The Ever-Victorious Army".

Lord Ellenborough's Treatment of the Hostages and Prisoners.—It is important, after dealing with the honours bestowed on the victors, to refer to the decisions of the Viceroy in the case of the hostages and prisoners. I will give as an example the treatment meted out to Pottinger, whose eminent services throughout the war were conspicuous. In January 1843, Pottinger appeared before a court-martial at which the President declared: "I consider that Major Pottinger omitted nothing so far as lay in his power, to maintain the honour of British arms and to secure the safety of the army, that he ultimately signed the treaty [with Akbar Khan] contrary to his own judgment, through the unavoidable necessity of acting as agent for the Council of War. The Court cannot conclude its proceedings without expressing a strong conviction that, throughout the whole period of his painful position, Major Pottinger's conduct was marked by a degree of energy and manly firmness that stamps his character as one worthy of admiration."

In spite of this magnificent testimonial, Ellenborough not only refused Pottinger's request for an interview, while his written demand to receive his pay when serving as a nostage fared no better than those of Lawrence and other officers.

Nor were these the limits of his injustice, since Ellenborough also refused to allow any medals won by

officers for services rendered by them prior to the disaster to be given to them. Such behaviour dishonoured Ellenborough and is fortunately rare among British officials holding high positions.

Lord Ellenborough's Proclamation of October 1.—The news of the complete success of the British arms induced Ellenborough to issue a grandiloquent proclamation which was dated October 1, as was the unfortunate document of Lord Auckland, in 1838. It was of no particular importance, but I cannot refrain from reproducing an extract from his proclamation of November 10, which Wellington aptly termed a "Song of Triumph". It runs: "Our victorious army bears the gates of the temple of Somnath in triumph from Afghanistan, and the despoiled tomb of Sultan Mahmud looks upon the ruins of Ghazni. The insult of eight hundred years is at last avenged. The gates of the temple of Somnath, so long the memorial of your humiliation, are become the proudest record of your national glory, the proof of your superiority in arms over the nations beyond the Indus." No such proclamation has ever been issued by a British Governor-General. It was certainly an outrage to Moslems and little less to Hindus, while on the high authority of Rawlinson, the gates brought back to India were not the gates of Somnath!

Summary.—In the last three chapters I have dealt with a campaign which, costing the lives of tens of thousands of British and Indian soldiers and thousands of Afghans, had involved our armies in a crushing defeat. Apart from the expenditure of some 15 millions sterling, this massacre of a British force destroyed our reputation for invincibility in India and Central Asia and undoubtedly led to the Indian Mutiny.

Auckland's invasion of Afghanistan was not only a terrible mistake but constituted an equally grave injustice to Amir Dost Muhammad and the people of Afghanistan, whose hatred was deep and enduring; Macnaghten, who aimed at a protectorate, failed completely to establish Shah Shuja on the throne; and Elphinstone and Shelton, through a complete lack of military qualities, involved

the British *Raj* in the greatest disaster its arms had suffered in Asia. Yet in the final act of the drama, British columns, crowned with the laurels of victory, converged on Kabul and exacted due, but not vindictive, retribution. There is a Persian proverb which runs: " History is the mirror of the Past and the lesson of the Present ". The bitter lesson of Kabul should never be forgotten.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE SECOND REIGN OF AMIR DOST MUHAMMAD

Is Dost Muhammad dead that there is no justice?—An Afghan proverb.

The Return of Dost Muhammad to Afghanistan.—One result of the victorious campaign which is described in the last chapter was the realization that the retention of Dost Muhammad as a state prisoner was no longer justified or expedient. Ellenborough accordingly issued a proclamation setting forth that " When the British army returning from Afghanistan shall have passed the Indus, all the Afghans now in the power of the British Government shall be permitted to return to their country ".

In due course Dost Muhammad accepted the offer. He was escorted to Shikarpur and formally set at liberty. In the first instance, however, he proceeded to Lahore, where he was magnificently entertained by Shir Singh, who was now *Maharaja* of the Punjab. There he learned that, as soon as the British had crossed the Indus, Akbar had reappeared at Kabul and had dethroned Shapur *Mirza*, a younger son of Shah Shuja. He also learned that the party of Zaman Khan had attacked Akbar who had retired into the Bala Hissar where he was besieged.

Dost Muhammad, realizing the situation, immediately sent four of his sons, Muhammad Afzal, Muhammad Akram, Muhammad Azim and Gholam Haidar to Kabul where they were able to relieve their beleaguered brother. Dost Muhammad, following shortly afterwards, was welcomed by the people as Amir of Kabul. He had been in banishment three years. About the same time Kohandil Khan returned to Kandahar from Persia and, once again, became its independent ruler.

The Ambitions of Muhammad Akbar Khan.—Dost Muhammad had appointed Akbar to the post of Vizier, but soon realized that his influence as the leader against the detested English and his ambitions to re-establish the Afghan Empire in the plenitude of its ancient boundaries were likely to cause trouble. The Amir had learned much during his residence in India, but his wider views were unpopular among the fanatical and conservative Afghans, while the conquest of Sind by the British, in 1843, naturally accentuated the anti-British feeling, since it destroyed all hopes of reconquering this outlying province, which had formed part of the empire of Ahmad Shah.

The Murder of Shah Kamran, 1842.—To return to the position at Herat: after the departure of Todd from that city in March 1841, Yar Muhammad, freed from all restraint, confiscated, tortured and enslaved at will. He also planned to seize and plunder his master.

Shah Kamran, suspecting these designs, suddenly took possession of the citadel, hoping that the population would rise in his favour. In this he was disappointed and, after sustaining a siege of fifty days, he was forced to surrender. The infamous Vizier managed to secure the jewels which Shah Mahmud had taken from the crown to Kabul, and also Kamran's treasure to the estimated value of £240,000. But there remained a jewelled vest, valued at £160,000 which Shah Kamran had entrusted to one of his wives, who, in turn, had made it over to a faithful servant to carry away to Khurasan. Yar Muhammad tortured the unfortunate woman, but without eliciting the secret. He subsequently distributed the younger women among his partisans and sold the elder ones, including four of Kamran's daughters, into slavery. Early in 1842, by his orders, Shah Kamran was suffocated in his prison.

Akbar Khan, Kohandil Khan and Yar Muhammad Khan.—In 1846 Akbar Khan prepared, against the wishes of the Amir, to invade Kandahar, on the pretence that Kohandil Khan was fomenting disturbances at Kabul. To strengthen his position, he married the

daughter of Yar Muhammad and arranged for Yar Muhammad's son to marry one of his cousins.

Kohandil Khan was exasperated by this new alliance, which placed him between two fires. He consequently raided the Herat province. However, Akbar Khan arrested this proceeding by rapidly advancing at the head of 800 cavalry. But, before this civil war had developed, he was suddenly recalled to Kabul by the Amir, whose orders he bitterly resented.

The Intrigues of Kabul and Herat with Persia.—Towards the end of 1846 Akbar and Yar Muhammad wrote a joint letter, carried by envoys, to Muhammad Shah, pointing out that the English were conquering the whole of the Indus Valley, and begging him to make an alliance with them against the common foe. The envoys were well received and the Shah sent jewelled swords and decorations to Dost Muhammad and to Akbar.

The Death of Akbar Khan.—The turbulent son of Dost Muhammad was still determined to attack Kohandil Khan, in alliance with Yar Muhammad. Dost Muhammad, who opposed this civil war, was threatened by Akbar and, quitting the Bala Hissar, took refuge with the Kizilbash troops. Akbar demanded that his father should be handed over to him, and would probably have proceeded to take extreme action when he was suddenly poisoned by a Hindu doctor. His death permitted Dost Muhammad to regain full power at Kabul.

The Campaigns of Yar Muhammad.—Yar Muhammad, upon seizing the supreme power at Herat, extended his authority over the small Uzbeg Khanates in the north, Maimana, Sir-i-Pul, Shibarghan, Andkhui and Akchah. He also attacked the Hazaras and transplanted eight thousand families to the depopulated lower valley of the Hari Rud. He finally engaged in a campaign against the Uzbegs of Balkh, but was forced to retire upon news of risings at Farah and Bakwa, which were fomented by Kohandil Khan.

The Ghilzai Revolts, 1847.—Muhammad Akbar Khan had sworn an oath of brotherhood on the Koran with a Ghilzai Chief, Muhammad Shah Khan, who, upon his

decease, claimed not only his property but also possession of his widows and the post of Vizier. Dost Muhammad finally quelled the rising which ensued and appointed his son Gholam Haidar to be his heir-apparent and Vizier. A second rising of the Ghilzais was also crushed.

Dost Muhammad and the Sikhs, 1845–1849.—In the winter of 1845 Akbar had despatched 500 horsemen to assist the Sikhs, but, on February 10, 1846, the British won the battle of Sobraon and entered Lahore as conquerors.[1]

The Sikhs for many years had offered to restore Peshawar to the Afghans if Dost Muhammad would aid them against the British. In 1848, when they embarked on the Second Sikh war, he was compelled to yield to the popular demand. He took possession of the plain of Peshawar and advanced to Attock, which was held by Colonel Herbert, who was ultimately obliged to surrender.

The Amir, content with the recovery of Peshawar, showed no disposition to continue to support the Sikhs, but he was forced by his Chiefs to send a body of cavalry some five thousand strong, which took part in the battle of Gujarat fought on February 21, 1849. The Afghans made a charge and were met by British cavalry, which not only defeated them, but pursued them into the passes. Dost Muhammad himself barely escaped by the fleetness of his horse and returned to Kabul defeated and humiliated. All hopes of recovering Peshawar were lost for ever, since he realized that Gujarat was a final crushing defeat for the Sikhs, and that the British would occupy their kingdom.

The Reconquest of Afghan Turkistan.—During the years 1850–1855 Dost Muhammad gradually reconquered Balkh, Khulm, Kunduz and Badakhshan, and appointed his eldest son, *Sirdar* Afzal, to govern these provinces, which became an integral portion of his dominions.

The Death of Kohandil Khan, 1855.—One of the most serious difficulties of the Amir was the bitter hostility shown by Kohandil Khan against Yar Muhammad of

[1] Cunningham, in his *op. cit.* pp. 312-316, gives a homeric description of this battle.

Herat. In August 1855 this firebrand died and the Amir, at the request of Rahmdil Khan, who had quarrelled with the deceased man's son, marched in person to Kandahar. In spite of much opposition by the people, who were stirred up by the *mullas* to engage in *Jihad* against the so-called ally of the British, he annexed Kandahar to his kingdom.

The Anglo-Persian Treaty of 1853.—We must, once again, deal with the position at Herat. Yar Muhammad had died in 1851, and was succeeded by his half-witted son Said Muhammad who, with a view to strengthening his position, commenced negotiations with Persia. This action displeased the British Government who negotiated a treaty with Persia, by the terms of which that power "engaged not to send troops on any account to the territory of Herat, excepting when troops from without attacked the place".[1]

The Shah and his Vizier disliked this treaty which they had been obliged to sign. The latter vented his spite on the British Minister over a trifling matter and owing to this offensive attitude of the Vizier, the Minister broke off relations, and at the end of 1855 quitted Tehran.

The Anglo-Afghan Treaty of 1855.—The threatening attitude of Persia towards Herat brought the Amir once again into friendly relations with Great Britain, and, in 1854, he sent his son Gholam Haidar to negotiate a treaty with Sir John (later Lord) Lawrence, at Peshawar. By its articles, respect for the territories of the Amir and of the East Indian Company was reciprocally agreed upon; and the Amir engaged to be "the friends of its (the East India Company's) friends, and the enemies of its enemies". By this engagement the twelve years of hostility and suspicion, which the First Afghan War had bequeathed as a legacy, were ended.[2]

The Occupation of Herat by Persia, 1856.—The Persian Vizier was at first apprehensive that the British

[1] *Aitchison's Treaties*, No. XVII, p. 72.

[2] The treaty is given in full in Rawlinson's *England and Russia in the East*, Appendix II.

would resent his unwarrantable action, but not having received any communication from London for some months after the rupture of relations, he somewhat optimistically thought that no action would be taken. Consequently, in the spring of 1856, he ordered a Persian army to march on Herat, where it was welcomed by Muhammad Yusuf, a Sadozai *Sirdar* who had put Said Muhammad to death, to avenge the blood of Kamran, and had taken his place. Later there was a rising against the Persians, whose tyrannical behaviour was resented, but, in October 1856, the Persian possession of Herat was finally established.

The Second Treaty with Dost Muhammad.—The British took prompt action to meet this situation and, in January 1857, by the terms of a second treaty, granted Dost Muhammad a subsidy of £10,000 *per mensem* during the continuation of hostilities, on the understanding that the money was to be spent on his army under the supervision of British officers; large numbers of muskets and quantities of ammunition were also supplied.[1] Actually, however, hostilities were ended before the Amir was able to take any action.

The Anglo-Persian War of 1857.—The British who were only anxious to bring just sufficient pressure on the Shah to oblige him to withdraw from Herat, occupied the island of Kharak and then the town of Bushire. A force under Sir James Outram marched inland and met a Persian army at Khushab near Borazjun and defeated it. Later, it landed at Mohamera on the River Karun and drove the enemy from the field. The Persian Government had already sued for peace after the capture of Bushire, and by the terms of the Treaty of Paris which was negotiated, the Shah agreed to evacuate Afghanistan and to recognize its independence. The Persians were amazed, and with reason, at the magnanimity of the British, who exacted no indemnity and did not even claim the dismissal of the hostile Vizier. Article 6 of the treaty runs:

> His Majesty the Shah of Persia agrees to relinquish all claims to sovereignty over the territory and city of Herat and the countries

[1] The treaty is given in Rawlinson's *op. cit.* Appendix III.

of Afghanistan, and never to demand from the chiefs of Herat, or of the countries of Afghanistan, any marks of obedience, such as the issue of coinage or "*khutba*", or tribute.

His Majesty further engages to abstain hereafter from all interference with the internal affairs of Afghanistan. His Majesty promises to recognize the independence of Herat and of the whole of Afghanistan, and never to attempt to interfere with the independence of those States.

In case of differences arising between the Government of Persia and the countries of Herat and Afghanistan the Persian Government engages to refer them for adjustment to the friendly offices of the British Government, and not to take up arms unless those friendly offices fail of effect.

The New Ruler of Herat.—The Persian authorities, upon receiving information about the treaty, handed over Muhammad Yusuf to the relations of Said Muhammad, who put him to death. He was replaced by a Barakzai *Sirdar*, Sultan Ahmad Khan, a refugee son-in-law and nephew of Dost Muhammad, who agreed that the *khutba* should be read in the Shah's name. Consequently Persia continued to rule Herat through this *Sirdar*, who visited Tehran and received a robe of honour from the Shah. It is difficult to understand why the British Government did not insist that the provinces should be handed over to their ally Dost Muhammad.

Dost Muhammad and the Indian Mutiny.—In connexion with the second treaty with the Amir, a Mission consisting of three British officers reached Kandahar early in 1857. Shortly afterwards the Indian Mutiny broke out and the Governor of Kandahar, after reporting this fact and adding the news that all the English in India had been killed, inquired, "Had I not better cut the throats of these three officers?" Dost Muhammad replied: "It is useless. I know these English well. It may be true that all those in India have been killed, but they will come in thousands from beyond the sea and reconquer the country. Better leave these three men alone." The Amir had gained wisdom by his sojourn in India!

Dost Muhammad captures Herat and dies, 1863.—The Amir had regained Kandahar, thanks to the death of his

disloyal brother Kohandil Khan. But he was not content to allow Ahmad Khan to recognize the suzerainty of Persia. Accordingly he marched on Herat, carried the city by storm and died nine days later. Thus passed off the stage a truly great Amir, who must have died happy in the knowledge that he had reunited all the provinces of Afghanistan.

CHAPTER XXXIV

SHIR ALI ESTABLISHES HIMSELF AS AMIR

The Afghans youth have reddened their hands,
As a falcon dyes its talons in the blood of its quarry.
They have made their white swords red with blood,
As a bed of tulips blooming in summer.

From an Afghan poem.

The Result of the Annexation of the Punjab.—A new phase in Afghan history opened with the overthrow of the Sikh armies by the British and the subsequent annexation of the Punjab. Up to 1846 the policy of the British Government had mainly been concerned with the creation in Afghanistan, in Persia, and in Central Asia to a lesser degree, of a favourable political situation that would help to protect India from invasion by distant foes. But, between 1846 and 1849, the British assumed control of the provinces conquered by Ranjit Singh, which marched with the loosely defined boundaries of Afghanistan. The Indian Empire had thereby reached its natural limits and, by this advance, the North-West Frontier automatically became, and still remains, the most important question with which British administrators are faced.[1]

On the other hand, the development of communications, and the assumption by the Crown of the Government of India after the Indian Mutiny, gradually resulted in the Secretary of State dictating the foreign policy of India; and when the Red Sea cable was laid in 1870, the liberty of controlling foreign policy by the Governor-General soon became a thing of the past.

[1] I have consulted *Life of Lord Lawrence*, by Bosworth Smith; *Life of Robert, Marquis of Salisbury*, by Lady Gwendolen Cecil; the *Cambridge History of India*, vol. vi; and *From Alexander Burnes to Frederick Roberts*, by J. L. Morrison, Raleigh Lecture, 1936.

Sir Henry Lawrence as Warden of the Marches.—During the period 1846–1853 Henry Lawrence set a notable example of the true lines for border administration. He recruited the famous Corps of Guides from both sides of the frontier and constructed the road from Peshawar to Kohat through what is still independent tribal country. His views are aptly summarised in a letter to Lord Stanley: "It is not to be expected that such a frontier can ever be what is called *quiet*, but it is quite in our power to prevent it being dangerous. . . . With a *carte blanche* I could guarantee, at a less expense than at present, to pacify the frontier within three years, that is, to make it as quiet as is consistent with the character of such a people."[1]

General John Jacob, the Warden of the Sind Frontier.—Another great frontier officer was Jacob. He had, like Henry Lawrence further north, gained a strong position on the Sind frontier. He had also realized the supreme strategical importance of Quetta. He wrote: "From Quetta, we could operate on the flank and rear of an army attempting to proceed towards the Kyber Pass; so that, with a British force at Quetta, the other road would be shut".[2]

The Close Border Policy of Lord Lawrence.—In spite of the striking success of these great frontier officers, John, Lord Lawrence as Viceroy failed to realize that it was unwise to cut off friendly intercourse with Afghanistan, since it would inevitably drive its Amirs to seek for support from Russia or Persia. He equally failed to realize that peace on the North-West Frontier could never be secured without a friendly Afghanistan. Lawrence had disagreed with a proposal of Edwardes, in 1853, that an attempt should be made to secure the goodwill of the Amir. He disagreed for two reasons: "One, that you will never get the Afghans to make a treaty; and two, if they make it, they will not keep it". Yet the treaty of 1853, strengthened by that of 1855, enabled Dost Muhammad to restrain his warlike subjects from invading India

[1] H. M. Lawrence to Lord Stanley, March 31, 1853.
[2] *Views and Opinions of General Jacob*, p. 379.

during the Mutiny. As Dalhousie observed, the views of Lawrence were based on the fallacy that the Afghans were too foolish to recognize their own interests.

The Indian Mutiny.—During the very anxious period of the Indian Mutiny, Dost Muhammad, thanks to the treaties given in the last chapter, and perhaps still more to his knowledge of the vast resources at the disposal of Great Britain, had remained our friend. So much so was this the case that John Lawrence, who feared for the position of the small besieging force at Delhi, instructed Edwardes, the Commissioner of Peshawar, to consult with Brigadier Sydney Cotton and John Nicholson, the Deputy-Commissioner, as to the advisability of handing over Peshawar to the Amir. The answer was worthy of its writers: "We are unanimously of the opinion that, with God's help, we can and will hold Peshawar, let the worst come to the worst; and that it would be a fatal policy to abandon it, and retire beyond the Indus ".[1]

The Sons of Dost Muhammad.—To understand the constant struggle for power between the numerous surviving sons of Dost Muhammad, it is desirable to give a list of the most important among them, with some details as to the posts they were holding at this juncture. The brackets denote sons by the same mother.

A { 1. Muhammad Afzal, aged 52, Governor of Afghan Turkistan
A { 2. Muhammad Azim, aged 45, Governor of Kurram

B { 3. SHIR ALI KHAN, aged 40, Heir designate
B { 4. Muhammad Amin, aged 34, Governor of Kandahar
B { 5. Muhammad Sharif, aged 30, Governor of Farah and Girishk

C { 6. Vali Muhammad, aged 33, Commandant of Akcha under Afzal
C { 7. Faiz Muhammad, aged 25, serving under Afzal

D { 8. Muhammad Aslam, aged 27, serving under Afzal
D { 9. Muhammad Hassan, aged 25
D { 10. Muhammad Husayn, aged 23

E { 11. Ahmad, aged 30 } both serving under Afzal
E { 12. Muhammad Zaman, aged 25 } both serving under Afzal

Gholam Haidar, who had formerly been nominated heir-apparent, and had negotiated the treaty with Lawrence, died in 1858, and the Amir had then informed

[1] *Life of Lord Lawrence*, by Bosworth Smith, vol. ii, pp. 137-141.

the Viceroy that he had appointed Shir Ali to be his successor. His reasons for the selection of Shir Ali in preference to his eldest son Afzal may well have been that the mother of Afzal was not a member of the royal tribe. Dost Muhammad, as stated above, had suffered much from a similar disability and preferred to choose a son with the highest claims by birth. In any case, as we have seen, Afzal had not behaved well when commanding a force outside Ghazni in 1839.

Shir Ali Khan announces his Accession to the Viceroy.—Shir Ali, immediately on his father's death, announced his accession to Lord Elgin, who, hearing rumours that his brothers might contest the throne with him, delayed his formal acknowledgment of the new Amir. In view of the friendly relations that had latterly existed with Dost Muhammad, this delay, which constituted a definite rebuff, was unfortunate. Lord Elgin died in the autumn of 1863 and it was not until six months after the receipt of Shir Ali's letter that Sir William Denison, who was acting Governor-General, gave a cold official reply.

The Amir, upon receipt of the acknowledgment, asked that his son Muhammad Ali might be officially considered to be his heir. He also asked for a gift of 6000 muskets. These requests were received by Lawrence, the new Viceroy, who agreed to recognize Muhammad Ali as heir-apparent, but declined to supply the muskets. About this period an envoy from Persia reached Shir Ali, and that ruler, realizing that there was little hope of help from the British, received him with marked distinction.

The Rebellion of Afzal Khan and Azim Khan.—Three months later, in April 1864, Shir Ali, possibly, if not probably, owing to the coldness of the Viceroy, was faced with a serious rebellion of his two elder brothers. Crushing Azim by a force under his general Muhammad Rafik, he crossed the Hindu Kush and engaged Afzal's army at Bajgah. After an indecisive engagement, Afzal sued for peace and was restored to his government. But before Shir Ali had quitted Afghan Turkistan, he heard that Abdur Rahman, the son of Afzal, whom he had

summoned to his presence, had fled across the Oxus. He thereupon imprisoned Afzal, and appointed Fatteh Muhammad Khan, son of the deceased Akbar Khan, to the governorship of the province. Having thus settled matters in Afghan Turkistan, he returned victorious to Kabul.

The Battle of Kujbaz, June 1865.—In the spring of 1865, Shir Ali's own brothers, Muhammad Amin and Muhammad Sharif rebelled. The two armies met in the vicinity of Kalat-i-Ghilzai and the engagement resulted in the defeat of the rebels. During the battle, Muhammad Ali, the heir-apparent, engaged in single combat with his uncle Muhammad Amin in which both were wounded with sword cuts. The uncle then killed his nephew with a pistol shot and was himself despatched by Muhammad Ali's soldiers, both men falling within a few paces of one another. Muhammad Amin's corpse was brought before Shir Ali, who exclaimed: " Throw away the body of this dog, and bid my son come and congratulate me on the victory ". Shortly afterwards, his attendants, not daring to tell him that his son had also been killed, silently brought in the corpse. " Who is this other dog? " exclaimed the Amir, but, when he learned the truth, he rent his garments and cast dust upon his head. In spite of the father's overwhelming grief at the loss of his heir, Sharif Khan, who had sued for peace, was pardoned, while Azim Khan fled to British territory, where he continued to plot against the Amir.

The Rebellion of Abdur Rahman Khan, July 1865.—For months after the tragedy Shir Ali remained a demented man, indifferent to all around him. Encouraged by what appeared to be the end of the Amir's reign, Abdur Rahman crossed the Oxus and, upon his arrival in Afghan Turkistan, was joined by the troops which had served under him. He was also aided by troops and money from Bukhara, and advanced on Kabul in the name of its Amir. This invasion aroused much consternation, since Shir Ali refused to return to the capital where the garrison was weak and the soldiers remained unpaid.

Abdur Rahman occupies Kabul on February 24, 1866.—The rebel *Sirdar* had won over more than one chief, who had been estranged from Shir Ali. He had also been joined by Azim Khan, who had recruited some soldiers. Muhammad Ibrahim Khan, a younger son of Shir Ali, had done his best to hold Kabul with an inadequate force of unpaid troops, but, finally, he was forced to take refuge in the Bala Hissar, and Abdur Rahman occupied Kabul city without serious opposition. A few days later, Muhammad Ibrahim, having received an assurance of safety, handed over the Bala Hissar to Azim Khan.

The Battle of Sheikhabad, May 9, 1866.—This very serious news from Kabul finally aroused the Amir from his stupor. Marching north with a force of 9000 infantry, 5000 cavalry and 25 guns, he found the enemy strongly entrenched at Sheikhabad, some thirty miles south of Kabul, and attacked with the utmost determination. At the fourth assault he was apparently winning the battle when, at this critical juncture, some Kandahar levies deserted to the enemy. Shir Ali, thereupon, followed by some 500 horsemen, fled from the field. The Governor of Ghazni, deciding to side with the victors, shut the city gates in the face of Shir Ali and released Afzal Khan. The liberated *Sirdar* speedily joined Azim Khan's camp, where, under a salute of 100 guns, he was proclaimed Amir. He then, supported by Azim Khan and all the Chiefs of the party, entered the Bala Hissar under a second salute.

The Battle of Kalat-i-Ghilzai, January 1867.—During the period that elapsed since the battle of Sheikhabad, the intrigues of various *Sirdars* are too numerous to relate. However, the Kabul army marched south and was met near Kalat-i-Ghilzai by Shir Ali. The Kandahar contingent broke, as in the previous action, and, as a result of the battle, the gates of Kandahar were shut against the vanquished Amir, who retired to Herat.

The British Communication to Afzal Khan, February 1867.—Afzal Khan wrote to inform the Viceroy of his victory at Kalat-i-Ghilzai. The position of the British authorities, faced with these kaleidoscopic changes, was

shown in a letter which stated that pity was felt for Shir Ali Khan although, as the Viceroy was careful to point out, he had not been aided with arms or money. Lawrence then went on to state that he would acknowledge Afzal as Amir of Kabul and Kandahar if he, in return, would recognize as binding the two treaties made with Dost Muhammad.

The Mission of Yakub Khan to the Shah, July 1867.—This short-sighted policy of the Viceroy had the result that Shir Ali, despairing of aid from the British, despatched his son Yakub Khan to solicit help from the Shah. Proceeding to Meshed the envoy had an audience of Nasir-ud-Din, but nothing followed except an exchange of gifts. The Shah was naturally afraid of arousing British susceptibilities.

Another Defeat of Shir Ali Khan, September 1867.—Shir Ali, realizing the treachery of his Kandahar subjects, made his way to Turkistan where he raised an army under Faiz Muhammad, Governor of the province. He advanced on the capital from the north but was defeated by the skilful tactics of Abdur Rahman at Kila Alladad, situated to the north of Charikar.

The Death of Afzal Khan, October 7, 1867.—Upon his return to Kabul, Abdur Rahman found that his father had died. He was at once involved in disputes with Azim Khan, the new Amir, who refused to pay the troops their long overdue arrears. Abdur Rahman, wishing to take his own troops to Afghan Turkistan, claimed the entire artillery force.

Anxious to be free from his uncle at all costs, and hoping to deliver the *coup de grâce* to Shir Ali, Abdur Rahman marched off northwards. It was mid-winter and his army suffered heavy losses from the cold, but he finally crossed the passes only to find that Shir Ali had evacuated the province. He then, much hampered by lack of money, set to work to re-establish his position, intending to pursue Shir Ali to Herat. He was, however, repulsed in the siege of the insignificant fort of Maimana, which was held by a loyal partisan of Shir Ali, and although the Chief finally made terms with the invader,

the losses of the latter had been so severe that Abdur Rahman abandoned all ideas of attacking Herat.

Shir Ali returns to Herat and advances on Kandahar.—Shir Ali in defeat was at his best. He fell back on Turkistan and, in January 1868, taking with him 6000 troops, 6 guns and a large sum of money provided by the widow of Faiz Muhammad, he marched back to Herat. He was obviously encouraged by the death of Afzal Khan, more especially as he realized the unpopularity of Azim Khan with the Chiefs and inhabitants of Kabul, and his strained relations with Abdur Rahman. Indeed the hatred inspired by Azim, who was both cruel and miserly, raised the country against him and, in the absence of Abdur Rahman, the position at the capital went from bad to worse.

Shir Ali, before hearing of the result of the siege of Maimana, had despatched a force under his son Yakub Khan. This force defeated Azim's sons, who shared the unpopularity of their father, and Yakub Khan reoccupied Kandahar.

The Fall of Azim Khan.—Azim Khan sought assistance from Abdur Rahman, but in vain; the Chiefs deserted him; Ayub Khan and Abdulla Khan, the younger sons of Shir Ali, were released by their father's partisans and collected a force. Finally Ismail Khan, who had been deprived of the governorship of Kandahar by Azim Khan, left Abdur Rahman (with whom he had quarrelled), marched on Kabul, and, being joined by tribesmen from the hills, occupied the city and ultimately captured the *Bala Hissar*. Upon hearing of the fall of the citadel, Azim's army began to desert, and eventually, without a battle, the Amir, realizing that all was lost, fled at the end of August to Afghan Turkistan.

The Battle of Zurmat, January 1869.—The final victory of Shir Ali was won in the vicinity of Ghazni, the gates of which were closed against Azim Khan, who had reappeared on the scene. There were almost daily skirmishes for over a month, but the cause of Shir Ali was materially strengthened by the arrival of 2 lakhs[1] of rupees

[1] A lakh of rupees represented £10,000 at this period.

and 3000 muskets from Lawrence with the promise of further assistance.

Abdur Rahman's account of the engagement [1] shows that, against his own judgment, he was forced by Azim Khan to attack Zanakhan, " where there are six or seven forts ", and thus attempt to prevent Shir Ali, who was encamped in the neighbourhood, from obtaining supplies. This movement necessitated dividing the force " and marching all day and over snow towards night ". Actually, since the fort was not surrendered, the attacking force spent the night sitting in the snow, and suffering severely from the cold.

Realizing that Shir Ali would fight in the morning, Abdur Rahman begged Azim Khan to send reinforcements without delay, only to receive the reply that he would start directly the weather became warmer. As was anticipated, Shir Ali attacked at dawn, captured the artillery and completely routed the rebels. Abdur Rahman, unable to rally his men, fled towards Zurmat, and joined Azim, who had deserted his troops. Abdur Rahman concludes his account of the disaster: " A few days before, I had possessed in my treasury 800,000 gold coins of Bukhara, 20,000 English sovereigns, 20,000 drams of gold, eleven lakhs of rupees, Kabuli, five lakhs of rupees, Kunduz. . . . Now we were defeated and had no money." Practically destitute, the ill-matched couple, accompanied by a few faithful followers, started on their travels, which are described in Chapter XLI.

Shir Ali's Visit to India, 1869.—Shir Ali was grateful for the help he had received from the British and wished to accept Lawrence's invitation to visit India, but deferred it owing to anxiety as to the movements of Azim Khan and Abdur Rahman. However, in March 1869, the Amir met Lord Mayo, Lawrence's successor, at Ambala. He was delighted with the friendliness of his reception, and in the discussions which followed he brought forward two proposals. In the first place, seriously alarmed by the continued advance of Russia towards his kingdom, he desired the British Government to guarantee him their

[1] *Life of Amir Abdur Rahman*, pp. 101-105.

aid in case of external attack. His second wish was that the British Government should not acknowledge "any friend in the whole of Afghanistan save the Amir and his descendants".

Mayo, however, was only permitted to write that "considering that the bonds of friendship have lately been more closely drawn than heretofore, it [the British Government] will view with severe displeasure any attempt on the part of your rivals to disturb your position as Ruler of Cabul and rekindle civil war, and it will further endeavour, from time to time, by such means as circumstances may require, to strengthen the Government of Your Highness. . . ."[1] The gifts made to Shir Ali on this occasion included 6 lakhs of rupees, 6500 muskets, four 18-pounder siege guns, two 8-inch howitzers and a mountain battery of six 3-pounder guns.

The Amir had received no guarantee against external attack, but his reception had been friendly; he had also been given money, arms and ammunition, with an understanding that he would receive further support from time to time. It is interesting to note that the Afridi tribesmen looted some of the Amir's stores, which were ransomed by a payment of 3000 rupees.

Internal Reforms.—Upon his return from India, Shir Ali, influenced by Mayo's advice, threw himself with much zeal into reforms. Among them was the creation of a Council composed of thirteen members, to advise the Amir on all administrative questions. As, however, Shir Ali soon realized that the Chiefs were merely looking to their own interests, this scheme ultimately fell through. The difficult question of finance was also attacked, and it was decided to collect the land revenue, not as hitherto, half in kind, half in cash, but wholly in cash. Shir Ali was also opposed to farming out the collection of taxes to the Governors. Finally, in order to secure the regular payment of the troops, he gave orders that 39 lakhs should be earmarked from the four principal provinces for this purpose. The army was then reorganized, all irregulars being converted into regulars and paid in cash,

[1] *Parl. Papers*, 1878–9, lvi, 466.

Sayyid Nur Muhammad Shah



Amir Shir Ali Khan

H.E. The Earl of Mayo

Abdulla Jan
(Appointed Heir-Apparent, 1873)

LORD MAYO RECEIVES AMIR SHIR ALĪ KHAN AT AMBALA, 1869

(*By favour of Sir Louis Dane*)

instead of by orders on villages. Efforts were also made to keep the men with the colours, while manuals of instruction were prepared in *pushtu* for all arms. Uniforms, too, were being gradually supplied.

The Viceroy gave assistance to the Amir's efforts by the gift of 1200 two-grooved Brunswick rifles, 1200 three-grooved carbines, and 1000 smooth-bore pistols. Meanwhile Armstrong guns were being manufactured at Kabul with some success. In March 1871, it was reported that the regular troops had received eleven months' pay for the past year, but were grumbling because one month's pay had been deducted on account of the cost of their uniforms! Of less importance was the organization of a postal service to Peshawar, for which stamps were struck, the improvement of roads and the cleansing of the Kabul bazaars.

A Persian Mission to Kabul, September 1869.—In the summer of 1869, a Persian envoy reached Herat whose ostensible object was to congratulate the Amir on his victories and to convey friendly assurances. Actually his real object was to learn what had passed at Amballa and to ascertain the Amir's views with respect to Persia and more especially with regard to Seistan. The envoy, during his stay at Kabul, presented a friendly letter from the Prince-Governor of Khurasan to Yakub, together with the gift of a double-barrelled gun. Shir Ali treated the envoy with coolness. He gave him a small allowance and dismissed him with a friendly but formal letter to the Prince-Governor at Meshed.

The Reception of Mir Abdul Malik, son of Amir Muzaffar of Bukhara, August 1869.—In the same year, the Amir of Bukhara, accompanied by Ishak Khan, son of Azim Khan, had marched to the Oxus, at the head of a strong force, in order to crush the rebellion of his son Abdul Malik. This Prince, who had attempted to raise *Jihad* against the Russians in opposition to his father's wishes, shortly afterwards made his way to Taktapul, where, by Shir Ali's instructions, he was escorted with honour to Kabul. Upon his arrival in the vicinity of the capital with eighty followers, the Amir held a durbar for the reception of the

Prince, who is described as being eighteen years of age, small and quiet. He had apparently made the remark that, had he known of his host's good relations with the British Government, he would not have sought his protection.

Shir Ali was inclined to take advantage of the situation and wrote to the Commissioner of Peshawar that, in view of the injuries suffered by Afghanistan, owing to the encouragement given by the Amir of Bukhara to raids by Afghan refugees, and in view of the certainty of Russia advancing to Charjui and Kirki, he proposed to occupy these places. The reply was that the British Government, while deeming him fully entitled to resist foreign aggression to the utmost, could not approve of the acts of aggression which the Amir suggested. It was also pointed out that the Amir of Bukhara was allied to Russia, which Power was on friendly terms with Great Britain.

Prince Abdul Malik had strongly urged Shir Ali to attack Bukhara, but upon meeting with a definite refusal, he left Kabul and, on November 1, recrossed the Oxus.

The Raid of Ishak Khan, July 1869.—At this period Ishak Khan, Azim Khan's son, who had recruited some Turkoman, crossed the Oxus and attacked Akchah. The local *Jezailchis* set fire to the magazine in that town and then, together with the Turkistan cavalry, deserted to the enemy. Ishak subsequently advanced on Balkh, but was routed near that city by Mir Alum, Shir Ali's Governor, and fled across the Oxus. At this period, owing to the number of officers and men who had served under Abdur Rahman, there was constant danger of a mutiny in the Afghan army, more especially among the artillery officers. On the other hand, information reached Kabul in November that Amir Muzaffar was displeased with Ishak, had stopped his allowance and had forbidden him to attend the Court.

Abdur Rahman had reported his arrival to the Amir of Bukhara, but, as mentioned in Chapter XXXIX, was coldly received by him at Hissar. Muzaffar mentioned the subject in a typical letter to Mir Alum: "Abdur Rahman Khan has arrived at Bukhara to perform devotion; you know how these people come as travellers, one

goes and another comes. I consider the wants of all, and treat them as guests for a few days, till their fortunes improve; at least, such is my hope. My friendship is the same for all of them."

The Rebellion of Yakub Khan.—Shir Ali was pressed, time and again, by Yakub to be acknowledged as heir-apparent. The Amir gave evasive replies, since his real intention was that his youngest son Abdulla Jan should be his successor. Yakub Khan was aware of this—indeed it was clear to everyone—and, in September 1870, he suddenly left the capital and wrote to Shir Ali: "My life being oppressed, I took to flight. For the sake of God and the Prophet do not trouble me. I am desperate; if you come you will receive no profit from me."

The Attempt on Kandahar.—The rebel Prince then collected his adherents and, taking his younger brother Ayub Khan with him, rode off to Kandahar. He found the gates of Ghazni closed against him and also failed to gain the support of the garrison of Kalat-i-Ghilzai. At Kandahar he occupied the adjacent Kandahar-i-Nadiri, collected some troops and levied some revenue. However, he again failed to win over the garrison and consequently fled westwards. He attacked the fort of Girishk, only to be beaten off and next retired in the direction of Seistan. Pursued by a body of troops, he reached the district of Rudbar, close to the Seistan *hamun*. He then entered Persian Seistan, where the Governor, Mir Alum Khan, who is referred to in the last chapter, supplied him and his followers with food.

The Anxiety of the British.—At this period the British Minister at Tehran obtained assurances that the refugee Prince would not be allowed to march on Herat through Persian territory, but that if he did enter Persia, he would be brought to Meshed and treated like other Afghan refugees.

Yakub Khan takes Herat, 1871.—The rebel Prince left Seistan in March 1871 with his following and, unhindered by the Persian authorities, marched on Ghurian, the Afghan garrison of which frontier fortress went over

to him. He then advanced on Herat, being joined by bodies of the local troops, and, on May 6, with the connivance of its defenders, Herat was taken with trifling losses.

Yakub Khan surrenders to Shir Ali, July 1871.—Much intriguing followed this undoubted success. But intermediaries finally succeeded in inducing Yakub, whose position was none too strong at Herat, to return to Kabul. There, in order to test his loyalty, Shir Ali sent his son the following message: "I have formed the wish to retire, and have withdrawn myself from worldly affairs, and am, by my own will and intention, entrusting the reins of government to you". Yakub replied: "As I have become penitent for my faults, I have entirely abandoned the idea of government, and have merely waited on Your Highness to obtain forgiveness for my past offences. Should Your Highness kill me or place me in confinement, I shall consider it a glory in the world to come."

Yakub Khan reappointed Governor of Herat, September 1871.—In September the Amir replied to the Viceroy's letter, in which Mayo strongly urged reconciliation with Yakub, that, in view of his deep humility and penitence, he had forgiven him. He then reappointed him Governor of Herat, but did not give him full control.

Such then was the position in Afghanistan at the end of 1871. Shir Ali, who was unpopular and unable to raise sufficient revenue for the payment of his troops and other expenses, had indeed regained the throne but, in this constantly disturbed land, more than in other countries, "uneasy lies the head that wears a crown".

CHAPTER XXXV

THE ADVANCE OF RUSSIA ACROSS CENTRAL ASIA

It would be manifestly futile to base the safety of the North-West Frontier of India upon any understanding, stipulation, convention or treaty with the Imperial Government. I do not mean to imply that the Emperor and his ministers would wilfully violate their engagements; but the authority of the Russian executive is so slight, the control it exercises over its distant agents and military chiefs is so unsteady, and its policy is so designedly tentative while the forces which stimulate the aggressive instincts of the nation are so constant, that little reliance could be ultimately placed upon mere verbal guarantees.—LORD DUFFERIN to Lord Salisbury, 1880.

The more powerful Russia becomes in Central Asia, the weaker England becomes in India, and consequently the more amenable in Europe.—SKOBELOFF.

From Merv, last home of the free-lance, the clansmen are scattering far,
And the Turkman horses are harnessed to the guns of the Russian Czar.
LYALL.

The Position of Russia in Central Asia.—The advance of Russia across Central Asia may be considered to have begun in the second quarter of the nineteenth century.[1] At this period her boundary in Asia ran from the mouth of the Ural River to Orenburg and thence to Omsk and Semipalatinsk. This line was defended by forts and outposts which, generally speaking, skirted the great Kirghiz steppe. At this same period British India was bounded by the River Sutlej and the north-west desert. Consequently a zone some fourteen hundred miles wide separated the two empires.

The First Expedition against Khiva, 1839–1840.—The Uzbeg *Khan* of Khiva had long been a most unsatisfactory neighbour. He had encouraged raiding for slaves, cattle and other loot, and the number of Russian prisoners whom he held and ill-treated was considerable. But, apart from these justifiable reasons for a punitive expedition, the British occupation of Kabul probably

[1] Among other works I have consulted *England and Russia in the East*, by Sir Henry Rawlinson; also *Anglo-Russian Relations concerning Afghanistan*, 1837–1907, by William Hubberton, 1937.

provided an incentive to the Russian frontier officials, if not to the Government, to undertake an important advance towards India. Accordingly, in November 1839, the Governor, Count Perovski, in command of 3000 infantry, 2000 Cossacks, and a powerful artillery, started from Orenburg on a march of 900 miles across the desert. He carried supplies on an enormous column of baggage camels. But the lack of forage and the cold, which killed off his camels by hundreds, forced the column to retreat before even reaching the Ust-Urt plateau, situated midway between the Caspian and the Aral Seas. The column, which suffered heavy losses, returned to Orenburg in June 1840.

This expedition, although it ended in disaster, alarmed Major Todd, Great Britain's representative at Herat. Under his instructions Captain James Abbot, followed later by Captain Richmond Shakespear, crossed the desert 700 miles wide to Khiva where they explained to the *Khan* the extreme danger of flouting Russia. Not content with this, the latter officer induced him to release all his Russian slaves, and personally conducted them, numbering four hundred men, women and children, to Orenburg, a truly remarkable feat.[1]

It had been decided to despatch a second expedition against Khiva, but the Uzbeg Chief tendered his submission and, in 1842, he agreed to a treaty, by the terms of which slave-dealing was abolished in Khiva, and raiding prohibited.

In Chapter XXX the relief experienced by the British envoy in Afghanistan at Perovski's failure is noted, while the subsequent disastrous retreat of our army from Kabul was triumphantly recorded by the Russians as the retirement to the old frontier and the abandonment by the British of the "tyrannous and exorbitant policy" of founding in the heart of Asia a powerful state, of which they should be the masters.[2]

[1] *Vide* "From Herat to Ourenbourgh", by Capt. Sir R. Shakespear, *Blackwood's Magazine*, June 1842. It appears that Abbot exceeded his instructions and negotiated an offensive and defensive alliance with the *Khan*, and that Shakespear was sent to repair Abbot's mistake.

[2] *Vide* Schiemann's *Geschichte Russlands unter Kaiser Nikolaus I*, vol. iv, p. 28.

The Russians occupy the Sea of Aral, 1844.—The failure of the Khiva expedition made Russia realize the importance of occupying the great Kirghiz desert which spread from the Ural Mountains to the Sea of Aral. In 1844 her explorers reached this inland sea and, in 1847, occupied the mouth of the Sir Daria by the erection of a fort termed Aralsk. In due course a flotilla was launched, which materially assisted her further advance.

The Decay of the Khanates.—At this period the Khanates, which Russia was about to annex, had fallen from their former greatness. Arminius Vambéry, who made his celebrated journey to Central Asia in 1863, describes the *Khan* of Khiva as " being in appearance so frightfully dissolute and as presenting in every feature of his countenance the real picture of an enervated imbecile and savage tyrant ".[1] Of Bukhara he writes: " The wretchedness of the streets and houses far exceeded that of the meanest habitations in Persia, and gave but an ignoble idea of Bukhara the Noble ". To misgovernment, corruption, bigotry, constant wars and the insecurity of the caravan routes must be added the decrease in the volume of the rivers on which the life of the crops depended. Under these conditions the absorption of the Khanates in the Russian Empire was effected with remarkable ease.

The Advance up the Sir Daria.—Russia was now operating in Khokand territory and naturally excited the hostility of that state by her occupation of the mouth of the Sir Daria. In 1853 she attacked the fort of Ak Masjid, situated 220 miles up the river. Owing to a reconnaissance made in the previous year, the fort had been much strengthened and was only assailable by regular approaches. However, a breach was effected by the explosion of a mine and Ak Masjid was stormed. The Khokandis made repeated but ineffectual efforts to recover Ak Masjid and, for the next eight years, Russia was fully occupied in consolidating her position. Apart

[1] *Travels in Central Asia*, *passim*. I spent a happy day at Budapest, listening to Vambéry's adventures, shortly after my return from my first journey in Central Asia some forty-eight years ago.

from the hostility of Khokand and the veiled hostility of Khiva, the whole area between the Orenburg line to the Sea of Aral was thrown into confusion by a Kirghiz bandit who for five years defied the Russian efforts to capture him. During this period the Crimean War also stopped all progress.

Russian Advance Eastwards.—The Russian advance to the eastwards had been steady and had resulted in bringing under control the Kirghiz of the Great Horde around Lake Balkash. In 1854 Fort Vernoe was founded in this area and garrisoned by 5000 military colonists.

The Creation of the Province of Turkistan, 1867.—When the main advance was resumed, Tashkent was stormed in 1865. In the following year, and again in 1868, the Amir of Bukhara was defeated, the spoils of victory, including Samarkand, while Bukhara now became a " subsidiary ally " of Russia.

These conquests constituted the province of Turkistan, whose administration was purely military, all reports being sent to the War Office at St. Petersburg. In 1876 Khokand was occupied and completed the annexation of the Khanates.

The Russian Occupation of Krasnovodsk.—In 1869 Russia established herself at desolate Krasnovodsk, now the starting-point of the Central Asian Railway[1] and, shortly afterwards, occupied Chikishliar, situated near the mouth of the River Atrek. Persia protested, but in vain. The declared object of Russia was the opening up of a trade-route to Central Asia, a policy which was partly inspired by the desire to gain contact with the province of Turkistan from the west. The routes to the interior were surveyed and Russian influence over the Yamut Turkoman was gradually established.

The Annexation of Khiva, 1873.—The attitude of the *Khan* of Khiva towards his northern neighbours had been consistently foolish. He had declined to release the captives whom he had enslaved, while he instigated raids on the Russian possessions. Altogether he was a typically barbarous ruler who, relying on the Russian failure of a

[1] It is generally termed the Transcaspian Railway by English writers.

generation ago, believed that he could defy that Power with impunity. He was warned, time and again, but in vain. Russia during this period had sent out powerful reconnaissance forces from three sides towards Khiva and finally, columns from Ak Masjid (renamed Fort Perovski), Tashkent and Orenburg converged on Khiva.[1]

On June 10 the capital was stormed and the *Khan* perforce signed a treaty with General Kaufmann by the terms of which "he renounced all direct and friendly relations existing with neighbouring rulers". Furthermore, the lands on the right bank of the Oxus passed into the possession of Russia, a fort being constructed on them. It was also stipulated that Russia possessed the sole right of navigation on the Oxus and that Russian merchandise was to pass free of customs. Finally, a heavy war indemnity was imposed.

Anglo-Russian Relations.—The relations of Great Britain and Russia were, generally speaking, distinctly friendly at this period. Assurances were given by Prince Gortchakoff that there was no intention of annexing Khiva and they were apparently genuine. Actually, the unwise behaviour of the *Khan* of Khiva, together with the ambition of the Russian frontier officers, forced the hand of the Russian Government. In view of the Tsar's assurance, given in January 1873, that there was no intention to incorporate Khiva or to extend her possessions in Central Asia, this almost immediate violation of assurances was naturally viewed seriously by the British Government.

The Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1873.—However, the Russian Foreign Office, as distinct from their War Office, was anxious to settle matters with Great Britain on reasonable terms. Various proposals were made but, finally, an important Agreement relating to the northern frontier of Afghanistan, was signed. It was stated in Lord Granville's despatch of October 17, 1872, as follows: "Badakhshan with its dependent district of Wakhan from Sir-i-Kul [Lake Victoria] on the east to the junction of the Kokcha River with the Oxus (or Panja)

[1] A fourth column, that was despatched from Krasnovodsk, was obliged, from lack of water, to bury its guns and retreat.

forming the northern boundary of this Afghan Province throughout its entire length". The Oxus continued to be the boundary as far as the ferry of Khwaja Salar[1] on the road between Balkh and Bukhara, at which point that river turned north-west towards the Sea of Aral. Further west it was agreed that a line should be drawn from Khwaja Salar towards the Persian frontier to include Andkhui and Maimana in Afghanistan, but it was stipulated by the Russian Government that "the old city of Merv and adjacent Turkoman districts" should be excluded from its possessions.

A despatch of Prince Gortchakoff of January 31, 1873, which was couched in most friendly terms, concluded this Agreement. Its results were two-fold. Great Britain gained for Afghanistan northern boundaries that were definitely fixed in one section by the Oxus, whereas west of the great bend of that river, the boundary was approximately, but not definitely, laid down. Of further great importance was the avowal by Russia, which was repeated on more than one occasion, that Afghanistan lay wholly outside her sphere of influence.[2]

Persian Campaigns against the Turkoman, 1852–1861.—The Turkoman question was one of great importance to Persia, whose province of Khurasan was incessantly ravaged by these manstealing raiders. In 1857 the Governor-General of that province invited eighty Turkoman chiefs to a conference at Meshed, where they were promptly imprisoned. Taking advantage of the favourable situation, he marched on Merv, which he occupied after gaining a victory over the leaderless Turkoman. Three years later, his successor occupied Merv once again but was defeated in an attack he made on an entrenched camp of the Tekke. The Persians fled utterly demoralized and were enslaved by hundreds, so much so that slaves became a drug on the Bikhara market. After this disaster, Persia limited her activities to raiding expeditions from Sarakhs.

[1] On the map prepared by Burnes the spelling is Khojusalu. Another spelling is Khoja Saleh. The spelling in the text is that given by Holdich.

[2] Gortchakoff to Brunnow, Jan. 31, 1873, *Parl. Papers*, 1873, lxxv ("Correspondence with Russia respecting Central Asia"), pp. 15-16.

The Proclamation and Campaigns of General Lomakin.—In 1874, General Lomakin, the newly appointed Governor of Krasnovodsk, issued a proclamation to the Yamuts, who occupied both banks of the Atrek, and to other Turkoman tribes who inhabited the country as far as Merv and the Oxus, inviting them to send delegates to meet him. Three years later, after a series of reconnaissances, he led an expedition against Kizil Arvat and received the submission of the *Khans*.

The Russo-Turkish Campaign, 1877–1878.—In April 1877 Russia had declared war on Turkey and in 1878, when the Russian army had reached the walls of Constantinople, the British Government had interposed with her fleet, and had subsequently, at Berlin, insisted upon the modifications adverse to Russian interests that were contained in the Treaty of San Stephano.

Russia's Counterstroke in Asia.—The answer of Russia, as described in Chapter XXXVII, was the march of Russian troops towards Afghanistan and the despatch of a Mission to Kabul charged with the task of making an alliance with Shir Ali, who was merely a pawn in the game and was thrown aside without scruple when it was lost. It is to be noted that Bismarck was working industriously to avert a coalition of Russia, France and England by stirring up dissensions between the three Powers. In the event, the conclusion of the Treaty of Berlin on July 13, 1878, stayed the advance of the Russian army, General Stolietoff was withdrawn but, as we shall see, other members of the Mission remained at Kabul for some months.

The Defeat of General Lomakin at Geok Teppe.—In 1879 Lomakin renewed his advance into the interior and attacked the walled camp of the Tekke Turkoman at Geok Teppe.[1] His artillery inflicted serious losses on its defenders, but his attempt at storming the fortress was repulsed and he retreated suffering heavy losses in men, material and prestige.

The Capture of Geok Teppe by General Skobeloff, 1881.

[1] It was actually termed Denghil Teppe, but is known as Geok Teppe or "Blue Hill" in Europe.

—In the following year Skobeloff who had been appointed to avenge this disaster, made a reconnaissance in force and then retired to the Caspian where he completed his preparations. In December he reappeared on the scene with a force of 7000 men and 60 guns. The fortress consisted of a quadrilateral enclosure with walls 35 feet thick at the base and 25 feet thick at the top. On this wide top were constructed an inner and outer parapet with loopholes and a large number of traverses, designed to protect the defenders. The Tekke made desperate sorties, but the bombardment by heavy artillery and the explosions of mines, followed by a storming party captured the stronghold. The pursuit of the fugitives became a massacre. Personally, when I visited the fortress some years later, I marvelled at the courage with which, in face of terrible losses, this walled enclosure was held.

Thus fell the last great stronghold of Central Asia. The survivors of the Tekke Turkoman were cowed and their kinsmen of Merv were easily persuaded to submit by Alikhanoff, a Moslem of Daghestan, whom I met later at Tiflis. In 1884 Merv thus became a part of the Russian Empire, as did the Sariks of Yulatan to the south. This campaign made the Tsar the Master of Central Asia.

The Effect on the British Position.—In Great Britain the capture of Geok Teppe, followed by the submission and annexation of the Turkoman of Merv aroused strong feeling. It was not apparently realized by our statesmen that organized Russia, in the presence of tribes whose warlike instincts found their chief outlet in raiding and who believed themselves invincible, was irresistibly compelled to advance until she reached a definite frontier, such as the British were anxious to negotiate with her for Afghanistan and, finally, did negotiate. From the military point of view, the annexation of the Turkoman country affected the strategical position most unfavourably for India, since the armies of Trans-Caspia and Turkistan were brought into direct touch, while railways completed their power of rapid concentration on the Afghan frontier.

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE FIRST SEISTAN MISSION, 1872

And thou hast trod the sands of Seistan,
And seen the River of Helmand, and the Lake of Zireh.
. . . .
But I
Have never known my grandsire's furrowed face,
Nor seen his lofty house in Seistan,
Nor slaked my thirst at the clear Helmand stream.

MATTHEW ARNOLD, *Sohrab and Rustum.*

A Geographical Outline.—Before dealing with the intricate problems relating to Seistan, a brief account of this interesting area, which is divided between Afghanistan and Persia, is, I think, desirable.[1]

Seistan is a large basin some seven thousand square miles in area, which receives all the drainage of a vast tract of country. The Helmand is the principal river, but the Khash Rud, Farah Rud and Harut Rud, together with torrents from the western mountains, all drain into this inland *hamun*, which at times forms a lagoon one hundred miles in length by some ten miles in width. Every few years, when its level reaches a certain height, the flood-water flows by the Shelag Channel into the Gaud-i-Zireh.

Today the Helmand with its branches forms the delta, in which we find the cultivated area of modern Seistan. Outside it there is no water and no cultivation. McMahon discovered the existence of at least three deltaic areas, which have in turn constituted populated Seistan. Moreover he discovered that each of these deltas has been used time and again as the wayward

[1] This description is based on "Recent Survey and Exploration in Seistan", by Colonel Sir Henry McMahon, *Geographical Journal*, Sept. and Oct. 1906, and also on my own observations.

Helmand changed its course. The population has perforce followed the river, on which its very existence depended, and it would appear that the Zarangiana, visited by Alexander the Great, covers the area now marked by the remains of Ramrod in the Tarakun area, where I noted ruins of important cities. It is also definitely established that Zaranj, the capital destroyed by Tamerlane, can be identified with the ruins of Zahidan in the present delta. Other and older sites abound. Chief among them are the ruins of Sarotar on the right bank of the Helmand, which extend for some sixty miles northwards in an unbroken line, proving the existence of a Seistan which was infinitely more prosperous and contained a much larger population than the 200,000 inhabitants of today.

In the Sarotar ruins Parthian and Sasanian coins are found with those of the Caliphs. To the west of the *hamun* rises the flat-topped Kuh-i-Khwaja, the only hill of the delta. On its southern slopes are the massive ruins of Kakhaha, a strongly fortified site, around which many legends connected with Rustam centre. Stein visited this ancient site in 1915, and discovered frescoes of the Sasanian period of great importance; one of them, as was befitting, represents Rustam holding his famous mace.

A Historical Note.—The delta of the Helmand, the classical Etymander, may be justly termed the birthplace of the legendary history of Persia. It was the home of Rustam, the champion of the ancient Keianian dynasty, whose exploits form the main theme of the *Shahnama* of Firdausi. To come to historical times, as we see in Chapter V, it was traversed in 330 B.C. by Alexander the Great, who termed it Zarangiana, after its inhabitants, who are termed Sarangi by Herodotus.

Zaranj, the Capital.—Continuing our brief survey: as the result of tribal movements in Central Asia during the middle of the second century B.C., described in Chapter VII, the Sakae, or Scythians, occupied the province until about A.D. 275, and in Sakastane, as they named it, we have Seistan. The Arabs conquered the province from the Sasanian dynasty in the middle of the

seventh century, and for some centuries after this change of masters it remained prosperous and civilized. In the tenth century Yakubi describes the capital Zaranj as being four leagues in circumference. It was strongly fortified with an inner and an outer wall. The latter had thirteen gates opening across a great moat filled with water. Reference is also made to the riches and learning of the inhabitants. In 1362 Timur, at that time a fugitive, raided the province at the head of 1000 horsemen, but was wounded in the foot and retreated, as narrated in Chapter XVII.

Returning to Seistan in 1383, Tamerlane captured Zaranj, which offered a desperate resistance. The inhabitants were massacred or enslaved and Zahidan, as it is now termed, was left desolate.

The present inhabitants of Seistan are mainly Baluchis, although a few members of the ancient Keiani are left, while the *Saiads* or fowlers who live along the edges of the *hamun* claim to be the original inhabitants. Probably by taking refuge in the reed-beds on their *tutins* or rafts they escaped the fury of the invaders.

Nadir Shah invades Seistan.—To resume our survey, Nadir Shah is believed to have captured Kakhaha after a siege of seven years. Upon the death of this, the last of the great conquerors of Asia, Seistan, in A.D. 1747, formed part of the empire of Ahmad Khan. Afghan rule lasted for over a century, but, as mentioned in Chapter XXXVII, the allegiance of the outlying chiefs was more or less nominal.

In the middle of the nineteenth century Ali Khan, Chief of the Sarbandi tribe, gave in his adherence to Persia and was rewarded by being granted a Persian bride of the royal family.

The Shah's Appeal to the British Government.—During the years 1861–1863 the Shah repeatedly called on the British Government to protect Seistan against alleged Afghan aggression, but was informed that, since the sovereignty of the Shah in that province was not recognized, it could not interfere. In 1863 the Foreign Office, in reply to a final appeal, replied with some lack of

suavity that "Her Majesty's Government being informed that the title to the territory of Seistan is disputed between Persia and Afghanistan, must decline to interfere in the matter, and must leave it to both parties to make good their possession by force of arms".

The Persian Government continued steadily to pursue its policy of increasing Persian authority and influence until Shir Ali, who had finally succeeded in establishing himself upon the throne at Kabul, threatened to declare war. Upon this, the British Government, in 1870, proposed arbitration under the Treaty of Paris which provided that the Shah should "refer for adjustment to the friendly offices of England any differences that might occur between Persia and Herat or Afghanistan". This proposal was duly accepted by the Persian Government.

The Appointment of the British Mission.—Major-General Sir Frederic Goldsmid had already constructed the telegraph line along the coasts of British and Persian Makran—a great feat. Moreover, he had not only delimited but had secured the ratification of the Makran boundary. He was now appointed to arbitrate on Persian and Afghan claims in Seistan. The British Mission, which included Majors Beresford Lovett and Euan Smith, landed at Bandar Abbas and was joined in Seistan by General Pollock, the Commissioner of Peshawar, who represented Lord Mayo, and by the Afghan Commissioner, to whose appointment the Shah had raised strong objections. The Amir, on the other hand, had frankly accepted the British proposal for a peaceful settlement of the whole question by arbitration.

The Persian Commissioner.—The Shah's representative was Masum Khan, who, acting in a similar position on the Makran Mission, had given infinite trouble. Upon arriving in Seistan, to quote Goldsmid: "Nothing too severe can be said as to his conduct from the moment in which he first came within the influence of the Amir of Kain, whose power terrified him, and whose constant bribes excited his intense cupidity".[1]

[1] *Eastern Persia*, vol. i, p. 260. This valuable work was written by members of the British Commission.

The Reception of the Mission in Seistan.—The Mission reached Nasratabad (then termed Nasirabad) in February 1872, and was met by an *istikhbal* or "Reception Party" sent out by the Amir of Kain. It was headed by two *Sirdars* whose men were "armed with every conceivable species of musket, rifle, spear, sword, shield, and known and unknown weapon of defence". No one was sent by Mir Alum Khan to make the usual "health inquiries", and other evidences of unfriendly feelings were not lacking. No camping-ground was arranged for, and the Mission was housed in some mud hovels, while the Commissioner was not permitted to hoist his flag, as he had invariably done throughout the Makran Boundary Commission and while on the march to Seistan.[1]

The Tour of the Commissioners.—In view of the delay of the Afghan Commissioner to appear on the scene, Goldsmid insisted on touring the province, and, leaving the wretched quarters "which so closely resembled an imprisonment", he started off with the Persian Commissioner who, through the Amir of Kain's representative, was practically able to dictate the direction of the daily marches. They visited the big dam at Kuhak and then marched up the Helmand to Bandar-i-Kamal Khan; they also visited Nad Ali. Generally speaking, in spite of obstructiveness of every kind, information of the utmost value was secured, while Beresford Lovett was able to survey the districts that were visited.

The Arrival of General Pollock and the Afghan Commissioner. — General Pollock and the Afghan Commissioner, *Sayyid* Nur Muhammad, reached Seistan early in March and camped at Banjar, a few miles to the east of Nasratabad. The Afghan Commissioner declined to call first on the Persian Commissioner and the Amir of Kain, partly owing to the gross incivility which he and his followers had experienced. He also considered that his position was much superior to that of the Persian officials.

[1] When I founded the British Consulate in Seistan in 1899, and hoisted the British flag, I received threats, which I ignored, from both the Governor and the Chief *Mulla.* Sir Frederic Goldsmid was deeply interested to hear of my experiences that were so similar to his own. But, fortunately, I was provided with a small escort of Indian cavalry.

The Final Breach with the Persian Commissioner.—Threatening letters referring to the suite of the Afghan Commissioner completed the breach with the Persian Commissioner, and Goldsmid, after consultation with Pollock, wrote to Masum Khan that, in view of the actions and behaviour of the Persian representatives, he had decided to leave Seistan and to make his report at Tehran. Summing up the position he wrote: "One inevitable conclusion forced upon the mind was that the Persian Government had most signally and culpably failed in the commonest courtesy, not taking even the most ordinary precautions to ensure that the dignity and safety of a Mission it had itself solicited, should be suitably upheld and regarded".[1] It is a great pity that Goldsmid was not provided with an escort of Indian troops.

The Award.—Goldsmid, in his arbitral award, divided the area into "Seistan Proper" and "Outer Seistan". The first was bounded on the north and west by the *hamun*, and on the east by the main branch of the Helmand. "Outer Seistan" was the narrow district on the right bank of the Helmand which stretched from north to south for over one hundred miles. "Seistan Proper" was awarded to Persia and "Outer Seistan" to Afghanistan. The decision was entirely just, as representing the actual situation. It granted Persia her reasonable claims, although she had to withdraw from positions taken up on the right bank of the Helmand. Amir Shir Ali, on the other hand, who expected that he would have been specially favoured in the award, was much displeased, as we shall see in the next chapter. Both parties appealed to the British Government, by whom the decision of Goldsmid was confirmed. Much credit is due to this officer and to his staff, who, subjected to intolerable treatment by the Persians, carried through a most difficult task to a successful conclusion.

CHAPTER XXXVII

THE GENESIS OF THE SECOND AFGHAN WAR

I have deputed my agent, Major-General Stolietoff, an officer high in the favour of the Emperor. He will inform you of all that is hidden in my mind. I hope that you will pay great attention to what he says, and believe him as you would myself. . . . The advantage of a close alliance with the Russian Government will be permanently evident.—KAUFMANN to Shir Ali, June 1878. *Parl. Papers*, 1881, xcviii (" Central Asia ", No. 1).

General Kaufmann's Correspondence with Shir Ali.—By way of an introduction to this chapter, I will give some account of the correspondence of Kaufmann with the Amir. The opening letter of a series, which led to his overthrow, was dated April 11, 1870 and referred to the arrival at Tashkent of Abdur Rahman. In it Kaufmann wrote that he had answered his request to be admitted to that city by stating that " the Emperor of Russia graciously affords hospitality to everybody . . . but that he must not in the least reckon on my interference in his quarrel with you ". He also stated that he was " quite far from longing to meddle in the internal affairs of Afghanistan ". Shir Ali was disturbed and perplexed as to the motive of the Russian Governor-General in writing to him. He forwarded the letter to the Viceroy who advised him to send a reply, thanking Kaufmann for his assurances. This he did, adding that he had consulted the Viceroy in the matter. On December 20, Kaufmann wrote again, reciprocating his friendly sentiments. These letters were, more or less, colourless but, two years later, Kaufmann wrote another letter referring to the boundaries of the state of Bukhara, which caused a sensation at Kabul. The Amir forwarded it to the Viceroy and drew attention to the Russian desire to establish " a regular and frequent correspondence with the Kabul Government ". He ended his letter with

an appeal to the British to bestow more serious attention to the maintenance of the boundaries of Afghanistan. Nevertheless, Kaufmann continued his correspondence while "positive assurances" were being given to the British Foreign Office that the "Imperial Cabinet continues to consider Afghanistan as entirely beyond its sphere of action". It is possible that the British Foreign Office, at this period, failed to realize that Russian Turkistan was administered by the practically independent Russian War Office.

To continue this correspondence, in the winter of 1873 Kaufmann wrote to the Amir a long letter describing the fall of Khiva, and Shir Ali, replying in January 1874, congratulated the Governor-General upon his great military success; at the same time he wrote a separate letter in which he announced that Abdulla Jan had been nominated his heir-apparent.

Kaufmann's next letter was dated several months later. In it he wrote that he had been absent in Russia and that he considered the recent alliance[1] between the Emperor of Russia and the Queen of England "would be an omen for the people of those countries which, under the protection of the Emperor of Russia and the Queen of England, live in great peace and comfort". It is to be noted that the royal marriage is stated by the Russian Governor-General to constitute an alliance by which Afghanistan was protected by the two countries concerned. Such, at any rate, was the view of the Kabul *durbar*.

During the period of this correspondence, the Amir was informed that the British Government in nowise shared or approved of his dissatisfaction at the increasing frequency and significance of these letters.[2]

The Mission of Sayyid Nur Muhammad, June 1873.—After the conclusion of the Agreement with Russia respecting the northern boundaries of Afghanistan, and of the publication of the Seistan boundary award by

[1] The reference was to the marriage of the Duke of Edinburgh to the Grand Duchess Marie, daughter of the Tsar.

[2] Vide *Lord Lytton's Indian Administration*, by Lady Betty Balfour, 1899, *passim*. It is founded on the official documents of the period.

General Goldsmid, given in the previous chapter, *Sayyid* Nur Muhammad, the representative of the Amir on that Commission, reached Simla as the envoy of the Amir to discuss these matters.

He agreed that the settlement as to the northern frontier was, generally speaking, satisfactory to His Highness, but he realized that no definite frontier had been delimitated west of the great bend of the Oxus and that the frontier Chiefs would probably lend themselves to Russian intrigues.

As to Goldsmid's award in Seistan, the Amir's dissatisfaction was as strong as that of the Shah. It must be recollected that Nur Muhammad was the Afghan representative on the Boundary Commission, and having failed to gain territory at Persia's expense, would naturally attack the British award. What he wanted, was an award in favour of Afghanistan *per fas aut nefas*.

But the Amir's chief concern was to know exactly where he stood with the British in connexion with the constant advance of Russia. Were they his allies and, if so, would they support him against Russian invasion by troops, by arms and by money? This was naturally the vital question for Shir Ali.

Lord Northbrook's Proposed Guarantee to Shir Ali, 1873.—Fully realizing the situation, on June 27 the Viceroy cabled to the Duke of Argyll, the Secretary of State for India: " We think it for interests of peace that Russia should know our relations with Afghanistan, and we say in paragraph 18 [of despatch summing up Central Asian correspondence with Russia]: ' Although we have abstained from entering into any Treaty engagement to support the Amir by British troops in the event of Afghanistan being attacked from without, yet the complete independence of Afghanistan is so important to the interests of British India that the Government of India could not look upon an attack upon Afghanistan with indifference. So long as the Amir continues, as he has hitherto done, to act in accordance with our advice in his relations with his neighbours, he would naturally look for material assistance from us; and circumstances

might occur under which we should consider it incumbent upon us to recommend Her Majesty's Government to render him such assistance.' I propose to inform Kabul Envoy of sense of this paragraph."

The Reply of the Secretary of State for India.—On July 1 Argyll replied that "he did not object to the general sense of the paragraph which you quote as a communication to Russia from the Foreign Office, but great caution is necessary in assuring Amir of material assistance which may raise undue and unfounded expectation". On July 20 Northbrook again cabled: "Amir of Kabul alarmed at Russian progress; dissatisfied with general assurances, and anxious to know definitely how far he may rely on our help if invaded. I propose to assure him that if he unreservedly accepts and acts on our advice in all external relations, we will help him with money, arms and troops, if necessary to repel unprovoked invasion. We to be the judge of the necessity. Answer by telegraph quickly."

Argyll's reply of July 24 ran: "Cabinet think that you should inform Amir that we do not at all share his alarm, and consider there is no cause for it. But you may assure him we shall maintain our settled policy in Afghanistan, if he abides by our advice in external affairs."

Shir Ali was at the parting of the ways. Had the statesmanlike policy of Northbrook been accepted, the Amir would have realized that we were ready to help him against an external attack. Once again the British Government had a golden opportunity of making Afghanistan a friendly state, but it was lost through lamentable lack of vision. Shir Ali perforce decided to turn to Russia. To confirm the accuracy of this view, I will quote Lord Roberts: "I had several interesting conversations with Yakub Khan, and in discussing with him Shir Ali's reasons for breaking with us, he dwelt on the fact that his father, although he did not get all he wished out of Lord Mayo, was firmly satisfied and content with what had been done for him, but when *Sayyid* Nur Muhammad returned from Simla in 1873, he

became thoroughly disgusted, and at once made overtures to the Russians, with whom constant intercourse had since been kept up.[1]

The Nomination of Sirdar *Abdulla Jan as Heir-Apparent.*—In November 1873 Shir Ali's favourite son Abdulla Jan was appointed heir-apparent. The Viceroy, the Shah, the Amir of Bukhara and General Kaufmann (as we have seen) were duly informed. The Shah, whose dignity was outraged by the latter being merely forwarded through the Persian Governor of Seistan, vouchsafed no reply to it.

The Imprisonment of Yakub Khan and the Flight of Ayub Khan.—The nomination of Abdulla Jan was most unwelcome to Yakub. At first he appeared likely to rebel but funds were lacking and, after many pourparlers, he visited Kabul under a safe-conduct — and was imprisoned. Immediately after his eldest son's arrest, the Amir wrote to warn Ayub Khan to remain loyal. Reports reached Kabul which tended to show that Herat was being prepared for a siege and that Persian support was probable. However, in the event, the rebellion collapsed and Ayub fled across the Persian border. The Viceroy attempted to effect a reconciliation between the Amir and Yakub Khan but, without success. Indeed Shir Ali resented his letter.

Lord Salisbury orders the Appointment of a British Officer to Herat, 1875–1876.[2]—On January 2, 1875, Salisbury wrote to Disraeli: "I am getting uneasy as to our lack of information from Afghanistan. Almost all we hear of what happens on the Western frontier comes from St. Petersburg or from Tehran. . . . We have only a native agent [at Kabul] who writes exactly what the Amir tells him." [3]

Northbrook considered this proposal, when it was made officially, but held it to be inopportune to press the Amir on the subject. Salisbury, however, repeated

[1] *Forty-one Years in India*, vol. ii, p. 247.

[2] In 1874 a Conservative Government came into power under Disraeli and, for four years, Lord Salisbury was Secretary of State for India. He then became Foreign Secretary.

[3] *Life of Robert, Marquis of Salisbury*, by Lady Gwendolen Cecil, vol. ii, p. 71.

his instructions, and Northbrook in his reply stated that, if the Amir were asked to allow a British Resident at Herat, he would certainly once again raise the question whether the British Government would unconditionally promise to protect Afghanistan against external attack. Northbrook also pointed out that, even if an Agent were accepted, he would be surrounded by spies under the pretext of guarding him and that persons visiting him would be watched and removed.[1] Shortly afterwards, nominally for personal reasons, Northbrook resigned. The last words he addressed to Salisbury ran: "By taking the initiative, I feel certain that you are throwing away your best card, and running the risk of embarrassment for the future, both political and financial".[2]

Disraeli's Policy in Asia.—To give some idea of the policy of the Conservative Cabinet, I quote from a letter written by the Prime Minister to Queen Victoria, dated June 22, 1877. It described the measures that were proposed to be taken in Asia against Russia, in case she seized Constantinople and war were declared against her. It runs: "It is Lord Beaconsfield's present opinion that in such a case Russia must be attacked from Asia, that troops should be sent to the Persian Gulf, and that the Empress of India should order her armies to clear Central Asia of the Muscovites, and drive them into the Caspian. We have a good instrument for this purpose in Lord Lytton, and indeed he was placed there with that view."[3] From a military point of view the operations indicated in this letter were fantastical.

Lord Lytton and the Amir.—In April 1876 Lord Lytton, as the successor of Northbrook, took over his high office as Viceroy and immediately, in accordance with his instructions, turned his attention to the improvement of British relations with Afghanistan. His first step was to instruct General Pollock, the Commissioner of Peshawar, to inform the Amir that it was proposed to

[1] When I was Consul-General in Khurasan in 1908, the Herat Agent was practically treated in this manner and no one dared to visit him.

[2] *Thomas George Earl of Northbrook*, by Bernard Mallet, 1908, p. 105.

[3] *Life of Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield*, by Monypenny and Buckle, vol. vi, p. 155.

send a Mission to His Highness, to announce his own accession to the office of Viceroy and the assumption by the Queen of the title of Empress of India.[1] This demand caused Shir Ali considerable apprehension. He considered that the British were alarmed by the Russian advance towards Merv and therefore wished to obtain his consent for the establishment of a British Mission at Herat. If he accepted, he feared that he would be accused of taking a step hostile to Russia. He also feared that the reception of a British envoy might lead to a Russian envoy suddenly entering Afghanistan. Finally he feared for the safety of the Mission in fanatical Kabul — and not without good reason. Consequently, in his reply of May 22, he suggested that all questions affecting the two countries had been discussed in 1873 with his envoy and that, if necessary, a similar procedure should be adopted in the present case.

In July, Lytton, who was irritated at what was, in effect, a polite refusal to his proposal, wrote a second letter to Shir Ali, repeating his wishes and assuring him that he had been actuated by a cordial desire for closer relations. He added: "It will for this reason cause the Viceroy sincere regret if Your Highness, by hastily rejecting the hand of friendship now frankly held out to you, should render nugatory the friendly intentions of His Excellency, and oblige him to regard Afghanistan as a state which has voluntarily isolated itself from the alliance and support of the British Government."

He continued that, with reference to the apprehension that had been expressed for the safety of the British envoy at Kabul, he was prepared to send his representative to any other place that the Amir might choose; that the fear that the reception of a British Mission might lead to a Russian Mission was groundless, since the Government of the Tsar had given assurances to the British Government that it would not interfere, directly or indirectly, in the affairs of Afghanistan; and, finally,

[1] I have consulted *The Indian Administration of Lord Lytton*, by Lady Betty Balfour, which is founded, so far as Afghanistan is concerned, on despatches and other State documents.

he declared that if the reception of his envoy, as he hoped, led to a more cordial understanding, he would be happy to meet the Amir at Peshawar in the autumn.

Three experienced Members of his Council, to wit Sir William Muir, Sir Henry Norman and Sir Arthur Hobhouse, dissented from the views of Lord Lytton and the majority of their colleagues. They considered that Shir Ali was justified in declining to receive a British Mission and that the Viceroy's letter was almost equivalent to a threat of war.

There is no question as to the threat contained in Lytton's letter. He was aware of the refusal of the Gladstone Cabinet to accept the statesmanlike proposals of Northbrook in 1873 and would surely have been better advised to have informed Shir Ali that the British Government had definitely decided to defend him against external aggression with troops, arms and money. Such a statement conveyed in a cordial letter would almost certainly have created a friendly atmosphere and would have made Shir Ali our staunch friend and ally. Furthermore it would have saved Afghanistan from the horrors of a second war within little more than a generation after the first, and Great Britain from a vast expenditure of life and treasure.

The Mission of Nawab *Atta Muhammad Khan.*—The Amir, in his reply, avoided all references to the proposed Mission and held to his opinion that he should send his envoy to India. This proposal was accepted *faute de mieux*, and in October 1876 *Nawab* Atta Muhammad Khan reached Peshawar. In the course of more than one interview with Sir Lewis Pelly, the Commissioner of Peshawar, it appeared that the Amir's aloof attitude was mainly due to the failure to secure promise of support against external aggression by *Sayyid* Nur Muhammad in 1873; to the Seistan award; to the intervention of Northbrook on behalf of Yakub Khan; and to the general impression of the Amir that British policy was purely selfish and neglectful of the interests of Afghanistan. The envoy laid special stress on the desire shown by the Amir in 1873 to enter into an offensive and defensive

alliance with Great Britain, and his deep disappointment at the refusal of the British to accept his wishes.

The Reply of Lord Lytton.—The Viceroy stated that he was willing to enter into the alliance as suggested; that, in the event of unprovoked external aggression, assistance would be afforded to the Amir in men, money and arms; that Abdulla Jan would be recognized as heir-apparent to the Amir and that a yearly subsidy would be granted. Lytton, however, laid down that the conditions attached to these concessions were that the Amir held no external relations with Russia, referring the agents of that Power to the British; that British agents should reside at Herat, or elsewhere on the frontier; that a mixed Anglo-Afghan Commission should demarcate the Amir's frontier; and finally, that the establishment of a permanent envoy at Kabul would be waived, on condition that the Amir deputed a permanent envoy to India and agreed to receive special missions whenever requested.

The Viceroy, unfortunately as it proved, clearly explained that unless the Amir gave his consent to the establishment of a British agent on the frontier, as a basis of negotiation, the above offers were cancelled. Experienced Pelly regretted this conditional stipulation, but Lytton insisted upon it. As a result the negotiations which lasted from October 1876 to March 1877 ended in failure.

The Treaty with Kalat.—The history of Kalat, when it formed part of the empire of Ahmad Shah and again during the course of the First Afghan War, has been dealt with in previous chapters of this work. In 1875 Captain Robert Sandeman, destined to rank among the greatest of British frontier officers, was deputed by Northbrook to examine and report on the relations of the Khan with his *Sirdars*, which were causing unrest and serious raiding. Sandeman reported that the Chiefs would welcome British mediation, that they were willing to become peaceful subjects of the Khan if their grievances were righted, and that he had induced them to make their submission to the Khan on these conditions.

Northbrook, realizing the importance of following up this opening, despatched Sandeman on a second mission in April 1876. Upon Lytton taking over the Viceroyalty, somewhat different instructions were sent to Sandeman, but the latter, on June 16, telegraphed the terms of a settlement which was proposed by the Khan and accepted by the *Sirdars*. Finally, on December 8, the Treaty of Jacobabad was executed. The Viceroy received the Khan and the *Sirdars* at a public durbar and general rejoicings celebrated the happy conclusion of Sandeman's mission. By the terms of the treaty, Quetta became an important British cantonment, while the Bolan Pass for the first time became safe for the passage of caravans, without payment of blackmail. It must, however, be mentioned that the occupation of Quetta was naturally viewed with dislike and suspicion by Shir Ali and his Councillors.

The Position in Europe.—In 1875 a rebellion in Bosnia and Herzegovina led two years later to the Russo-Turkish War. Disraeli's policy was, as we have seen, strongly anti-Russian, so much so that war with Russia appeared to be a probability.

The Mission of General Stolietoff to Kabul, July 1878.—The bitter hostility existing in Europe between the two erstwhile friendly Powers, induced Kaufmann, without any instructions from the Russian Government, to announce to the Amir the despatch of an envoy to Kabul, in the letter which serves as a motto to this chapter. On June 18 — the day on which the Congress of Berlin held its first sitting — Stolietoff left Tashkent for the Afghan capital. To support his envoy, Kaufmann also despatched three columns of Russian troops towards various points on the Afghan frontier. The Amir was embarrassed by the appearance of the Mission, and was reluctant to receive it,[1] but treated it with honour upon its entry into Kabul.

On the day before his arrival at the capital, it appears that Stolietoff received a letter from Kaufmann informing

[1] In Argyll's *Autobiography and Memoirs*, vol. ii, p. 330, we read: "The Amir was very reluctant to receive it, and was only bullied into it".

him of the signature of the Treaty of Berlin and instructing him to refrain from making any definite arrangements with the Amir. Stolietoff, however, realizing the almost independent position of the Governor-General, produced a draft of a treaty with Russia offering assistance to the Amir against an external enemy and recognition of Abdulla Jan as heir-apparent.

The exact terms of the treaty are perhaps doubtful [1] but, on August 23, the Amir wrote to Kaufmann that Stolietoff had written down his wishes to strengthen friendly relations between Russia and would shortly return with his reply.[2] This letter proved the case against the Amir.

The Assurance of M. de Giers.—It is of considerable importance to note that, on July 2, 1878, Lord Loftus inquired of M. de Giers whether any Russian official had been instructed by St. Petersburg or by Kaufmann to proceed on a mission to Kabul. De Giers, in his reply, categorically denied that any Mission had been sent or was intended to be sent to Kabul either by the Imperial Government or by Kaufmann.[3] De Giers was probably being deceived by the Russian War Office, since his character would be seriously affected by his denying facts that were soon known to the world.

The Despatch of a British Mission to Kabul.—The appearance of a Russian Mission at Kabul caused a crisis. The British Government agreed that it should be met by insisting that the Amir should receive a Mission under General Sir Neville Chamberlain. The letter to the Amir, containing this announcement, reached Kabul on August 17, the date of the death of the heir-apparent. The Amir asked for delay on this account, but, as noted above, he continued his correspondence with Kaufmann.

[1] In *Forty-one Years in India*, Appendix V, Lord Roberts gives this treaty as written from memory by *Mirza* Muhammad Nabi. Article 3 ran: "The Russian Government engages that if any foreign enemy attacks Afghanistan and the Amir is unable to drive him out, and asks for the assistance of the Russian Government, the Russian Government will repel the enemy either by means of advice or by such other means as it may consider proper".

[2] *Parl. Papers*, 1881, xcviii ("Central Asia", No. 1), p. 350.

[3] Loftus to Salisbury, July 3, 1878, *Parl. Papers*, 1878, lxxx ("Central Asia", No. 1), p. 132.

The Intervention of Lord Salisbury.—Since no reply was received from Kabul, on September 8, Lytton proposed the immediate despatch of Chamberlain with an escort of 1000 men to Kabul. Three days later Salisbury requested Cranbrook, the Secretary of State for India, to await the receipt of a letter from de Giers which was on its way to London. But when Cranbrook's instructions in this sense reached India, frontier officers were already arranging with Khaibar tribesmen for the passage of the Mission and Lytton was assured that postponement of the Mission would incur the contempt of the tribesmen. He therefore allowed another week for the receipt of de Giers' letter and, failing this, on September 20, without any further reference to London, ordered Chamberlain to advance.

Sir Neville Chamberlain's Mission stopped by Afghan Troops.—The Mission was, however, met by a strong hostile force at Ak Masjid, and it perforce returned to Peshawar, fortunate to escape being cut up.

The Decision of the British Cabinet.—Towards the end of October there were stormy meetings of the Cabinet. Lytton's policy was attacked by Salisbury, who feared that trouble with Russia over Afghan matters might seriously hinder the execution of the Treaty of Berlin. Cranbrook, however, strongly supported the Viceroy, whose views finally prevailed.

The Despatch of an Ultimatum to Shir Ali.—Accordingly, on November 2, an ultimatum was despatched to Kabul, which allowed until November 20 for a reply. Shir Ali naturally turned to Kaufmann, who gave him no assistance whatever and suggested that he should make terms with the British.

It is difficult not to sympathize with Shir Ali at this juncture. The mission of Stolietoff was a Russian *riposte* to the despatch by Disraeli of Indian troops to Malta. To quote Argyll: "We had ourselves placed the Amir in a position of extrême difficulty and had reason to believe and to know that he was not in any way party to the Russian policy in sending it."[1] Surely, under these

[1] *Op. cit.* vol. ii, p. 330.

conditions and, bearing in mind the bitter grief of the Amir at the sudden death of his favourite son, more patience and more tact should have been displayed by the Viceroy.

Lord Salisbury's Letter.—By way of conclusion to this chapter, I will quote a remarkable letter of Salisbury: "As for the embassy to Kabul, it appears to have been self-generated. Schouvaloff had heard nothing of it the whole time he was at Berlin — nor during the three weeks he afterwards spent at St. Petersburg. Only when he went to Wilbad he saw it in the newspapers. He immediately rushed to Gortchakoff and asked, 'Has there been any Mission to Kabul?'. Gortchakoff putting his hand on his brow and reflecting: '*Non, je ne le crois pas*'."[1]

[1] To Lord Odo Russell, Nov. 27, 1878.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

THE SECOND AFGHAN WAR

The Emperor considers you as a brother, and you also, who are beyond the Oxus must display the same sense of friendship and brotherhood. . . . The Emperor's desire is that you should not admit the English into your country, and, like last year, treat them with deceit and deception until the present cold season passes away; then the will of the Almighty will be manifest to you — that is to say, the Russian Government will come to your assistance.—The Letter of GENERAL STOLIETOFF to the Vizier of Shir Ali, dated October 8, 1878.

And yet when I think of Shir Ali as he lies in his sepulchre low,
How he died betrayed, heart-broken, 'twixt infidel friend and foe,
Driven from his throne by the English, and scorned by the Russian, his guest,
I am well content with the vengeance, and I see God works for the best.
SIR ALFRED LYALL, *The Amir's Soliloquy*.

Three British Columns invade Afghanistan.—No answer to the ultimatum of the Viceroy was received from Kabul owing, as it was subsequently proved, to delay in transmission. Accordingly, upon the expiration of the time limit, three columns, whose objectives were Kandahar, Kabul by the Kurram Valley and also by the Khaibar route under Sir Donald Stewart, Sir Frederick Roberts and Sir Sam Browne respectively, marched across the frontiers of Afghanistan.[1]

Sir Donald Stewart advanced on Kandahar from the Indus, with Sir Michael Biddulph leading the advance force 6000 strong from Quetta, which was followed by a slightly stronger main body. In 1878 the railway had only reached the Indus, and the troops, as in the First Afghan War, had the very trying march across the desert of Kach Gandava and up the Bolan Pass. But the State of Kalat (which included the Bolan Pass) was now under British control, while Quetta was a relatively well-supplied

[1] Among the authorities consulted, the most important is *The Second Afghan War, 1878–80* (abridged official account), 1908; also *Forty-one Years in India*, by Lord Roberts; *Lord Lytton's Indian Administration*, by Lady Betty Balfour; and *Sir Mortimer Durand*, by Sykes.

centre. There was no opposition to this column which occupied Kandahar on January 8, 1879.

The March up the Kurram Valley.—Roberts, whose transport service had been collected haphazard — there was no organized transport service in the Indian army at that period — was very anxious about its deficiencies. He also was aware that the *mullas* were tampering with the Moslem sepoys, who did not relish taking part in a war against the Amir. Accordingly, upon hearing that the Afghans were holding the Peiwar *Kotal* in great strength, he applied for reinforcements, which were somewhat reluctantly granted. The fact that the Turis of the Kurram were Shias guaranteed their loyal support, more especially as Roberts was authorized to promise them that the British occupation would be permanent.

The Battle of the Peiwar Kotal, December 2, 1878.—The Afghan troops who had retreated up the valley took up a strong position on the pine-clad pass. A main frontal attack was ruled out by the rugged nature of the ground and by the necessity of advancing in single file. The mountains on the enemy right also forbade an attack. Most fortunately a track leading to the Afghan left flank was discovered, and it was determined to send a body of troops in that direction, while a frontal attack would also be made to occupy the enemy. While the flanking body was stumbling up the valley with constant crossing of streams, two shots were fired by Pathans of one of the regiments which was leading the column. Roberts, who was with the flanking column, immediately ordered one company of the 72nd Highlanders and one company of the 5th Gurkhas to the front, who, on reaching the foot of the Spingawi Pass at the false dawn, were fired on by the enemy and charged, supported by two guns of the mountain battery. The enemy holding this part of the position were surprised and fled. Roberts writes: " Its approaches were commanded by precipitous heights, and defended by breastworks of felled trees, which completely screened the defenders. . . . Had we not been able to surprise the enemy before the day

dawned, I doubt whether any of us could have reached the first entrenchment."[1]

The main body on the Peiwar *Kotal* was still holding its position but, at first, part of the flanking column lost its way and the situation became serious. Roberts also learned that the frontal attack on the Peiwar *Kotal* had been repulsed with somewhat heavy losses.

By a happy chance a route was discovered for a further turning movement, which threatened the Afghan rear. This caused their artillery fire to slacken, while their infantry broke and fled from the main position — and the battle was won. Actually, owing to the exhaustion of the troops, the Afghan position was not occupied until the following morning when its impregnability against a frontal attack was evident. Roberts and his splendid troops deserve immense credit for the victory at the Peiwar *Kotal*.

After halting for a few days to rest the force and to allow supplies and tents to be brought up, Roberts marched along the Kabul road to Ali Khel. From this camp he visited the Shutargardan Pass which rises to an elevation of 11,000 feet, and obtained a splendid view of the Logar Valley and beyond.

The Khaibar Column.—Sir Sam Browne advanced up the Khaibar Pass at the head of a powerful column of 16,000 men. Following the example of Pollock, he detached a strong force by the tracks over the hills to the north to outflank the Afghan position. At noon the main body came under the fire of the artillery at Ak Masjid and, unsupported by his detached force, which had been delayed, he did not involve himself in a frontal attack. On resuming his advance in the morning, the fort was found to be empty, the Afghans having disappeared during the night. Browne then advanced to Jalalabad without further opposition, although constant attacks were made on his convoys by the predatory tribesmen.

The Flight and Death of Shir Ali.—Upon the news of the Peiwar *Kotal* victory reaching Kabul, the Amir was deserted by many of his leading *Sirdars*, while his soldiers

[1] *Forty-one Years in India*, vol. ii, p. 141.

returned to their homes. He released Yakub from prison and appointed him Regent. Then, hoping for the promised Russian support, and leaving a letter addressed to the British in which he stated that he had decided to lay the whole question before the Tsar, he fled northwards to Balkh.

Treacherous Kaufmann, in response to the Amir's frantic appeals, merely advised him to endeavour to make peace with the British. He refused to send any troops to his support and would not permit the unfortunate Amir to visit St. Petersburg. On February 21, 1879, worn out with illness and the knowledge that he had been betrayed by Russia, Shir Ali died at Mazar-i-Sharif.

The Position of Yakub Khan.—Lytton wrote to the new Amir proposing that he should receive a mission at Kabul. Yakub took council with the Afghan officers who had accompanied Shir Ali in his flight as to his policy, and they advised him to abandon the British and trust to Russia. Hearing this, the British Agent, who was the bearer of Lytton's and Major Cavagnari's letters, fearing for the safety of a British mission at Kabul, suggested that Yakub should, instead, visit the British camp, which had now advanced to Gandamak. This was agreed to and the Amir proceeded to Gandamak where he appeared with his Commander-in-Chief, both of them somewhat tactlessly wearing Russian uniforms.

Yakub did not create a favourable impression. Durand,[1] who saw a good deal of him shortly afterwards, summed him up: "He is by no means the fine young soldier I used to imagine him; a weak vacillating face, pleasant enough at times, but not trustworthy or in any way impressive. The type is strongly Jewish."

Before the meeting, a proclamation, addressed by Yakub to a tribe which had been giving the British trouble, was intercepted. In it he exhorted the tribesmen to have no fear of the infidels, against whom he was organizing an irresistible force of *Ghazis*. The proclamation terminated with the verse from the Koran: "Verily Allah has destroyed the powerful ones".

[1] Sykes, *Sir Mortimer Durand*, p. 94.

The Treaty of Gandamak, May 26, 1879.—Cavagnari disregarded this treacherous behaviour of Yakub and negotiated with him the Treaty of Gandamak.[1] By its terms Great Britain definitely agreed to protect Afghanistan against external attack, while it was stipulated that there were to be no direct communications by that country with other Powers. The Amir was granted an annual subsidy of 6 lakhs of rupees. To continue: the British Government restored to the Amir Kandahar and Jalalabad, which towns were in the possession of British troops, but, with the agreement of His Highness, " the districts of Kurram and Pishin and Sibi . . . shall be treated as assigned districts. . . .[2] The British Government will retain in its own hands the control of the Khaibar and Michni Passes . . . and of all relations with the independent tribes of the territory connected with these Passes."

By the Treaty of Gandamak the position of Quetta and its lines of communication with India were assured owing to the occupation of Pishin and Sibi. The occupation of the Kurram Valley, apart from its strategical importance, was partly due to its inhabitants, who, as Shia Moslems, were perpetually raided by their fanatical neighbours and were thus loyal to the British, to whom they had appealed for protection. Finally, the arrangement about the passes strengthened the British control over the restless Afridis.

Sir Louis Cavagnari reaches Kabul as British Envoy, July 24, 1879.—It was agreed by the Amir to receive a British mission at Kabul. Sir Louis Cavagnari, as he had been gazetted, was appointed envoy with a staff of three British officers and an escort of the Guides. He was received by various officials, and riding on an elephant entered Kabul with salutes of guns and of the garrison; he took up his residence in the Bala Hissar.

On August 30 Cavagnari wrote that, upon the whole, the position was satisfactory, but he reported that six

[1] *Parl. Papers*, 1878–1879, lvi, 691.

[2] In " assigned districts " the revenue was utilized for the expenses of administration, and the balance was due to be paid to the Amir.

regiments from Herat, who had arrived early in August, had displayed mutinous tendencies and that a fracas had taken place between the Afghan troops and some men of his escort. On September 2 he telegraphed, " All well ". On September 3 three of the six regiments asked for their pay. They were offered one month's pay but refused to take less than three months'. The troops then mutinied and, marching to the Residency, asked Cavagnari to pay them. Apparently he declined to intervene, and their fanaticism having been excited by the *mullas*, they attacked the Residency. The resistance, if hopeless, was most determined, repeated sallies being made, but finally the gallant band was massacred and the Residency was burned.[1] The mission had been in Kabul only six weeks and five days when the tragedy occurred.

Apart from the loss of valuable British lives, the blow to British prestige and the collapse of the policy of securing a scientific frontier for the security of India made the situation extremely serious. To quote Lytton's letter to Beaconsfield: " The web of policy so carefully and patiently woven has been rudely shattered. We have now to weave a fresh and, I fear, a wider one from undoubtedly weaker materials." [2]

The Kabul Field Force.—Of the three British forces Sir Sam Browne's had been broken up, while Sir Donald Stewart was in the neighbourhood of Kandahar, where only a small body of troops was stationed. The Kurram force alone was in a position to advance rapidly on Kabul. Roberts was therefore appointed to command the Kabul Field Force, as it was called, with instructions to march on the capital with all possible expedition. It included two infantry brigades, a cavalry brigade and artillery, with horse, field and mountain batteries. The force totalled 7500 men and 22 guns.

The question of transport and the extent of the lines of communication, which would have to be protected, were all causes of anxiety, but of far graver import was the necessity to cut adrift from the Kurram line of com-

[1] For Abdur Rahman's views on the tragedy *vide* his *op. cit.* vol. i, p. 152.

[2] Dated September 4. Vide *op. cit.* pp. 358-359.

munication which would be closed in mid-winter, and to rely on the Khaibar route being opened by the time Kabul was taken. Roberts, on reaching the camp, writes that he was delighted with the spirit of the force, which was burning to avenge the massacre of their comrades.

The Attitude of Yakub towards the Massacre.—Upon his arrival at Ali Khel, two letters written by Yakub on September 3 and September 4 were handed to Roberts by the political agent. According to them, " the troops who had assembled for their pay suddenly broke out and stoned their officers and then all rushed to the Residency and stoned it, receiving in return a hail of bullets. . . . People from Sherpur and the country around and city people of all classes poured into the Bala Hissar and began destroying workshops, artillery park and magazine, and all the troops and people attacked the Residency."

The question of the Amir's complicity in the tragedy was subsequently considered, with the result that it was found that the massacre was not instigated by him, but that although he must be acquitted of complicity in the outrage, he could, by acting promptly, have prevented it. It is curious how this massacre resembled that of Burnes a generation earlier. In each case quick, decided action by the Amir would have been effective.

Roberts writes to the Amir.—Under instructions from Lytton, Roberts wrote to Yakub that, in view of the murder of Cavagnari, his staff and his escort by Afghan troops and in view of the Amir's inability to establish his authority, a British army would advance on Kabul with the double object of strengthening his Government and of exacting retribution from the murderers of the British Mission. Roberts added that since the British Government had been informed of the despatch of emissaries from Kabul to raise the tribes against him, he desired His Highness to send a confidential agent to confer with him.

The Policy of the Vizier and the Finance Minister.—Two Ministers accordingly reached the camp who, after giving many assurances of the friendship of Yakub for the British, evidently, in accordance with the Amir's

instructions, attempted by every means "to stop the advance of the force long enough for the whole country to rise and attack us", as Roberts put it. Neither of these envoys wished to remain, so they were dismissed.

The Advance on Kabul and the Arrival in Camp of the Amir.—As soon as supplies had been collected, Roberts resumed his march to Kabul. After crossing the Shuturgardan Pass, to his embarrassment he was met at Kushi by the Amir with a large following. Yakub himself now urged on Roberts the advisability of delay, but realizing that the Amir's wish was to gain time for the assembly of a strong force, Roberts marched steadily northwards. At this period General Bright was advancing up the Khaibar with a force of 16,000 men, while Sir Donald Stewart, having reoccupied Kandahar and Kalat-i-Ghilzai, was threatening Ghazni.

The Battle of Charasia.—*Sirdar* Nek Muhammad, an uncle of the Amir, at this period rode out to the camp and held a secret conference with the Amir, after which, having ascertained the exact strength of the British, he hastened back to Kabul, obviously to organize the Afghan army.

On October 6 reconnoitring parties reported that the range between Kabul and Charasia was being occupied by Afghan troops, while parties of Ghilzais appeared on the hills running along both flanks of the camp. Roberts possessed only enough transport for half his force, and Macpherson's brigade on this account remained a march in rear. Realizing the necessity of immediate action, Roberts ordered General (later Sir Thomas) Baker to attack the right of the position, which was carried by Major White[1] and the 92nd Highlanders, who captured twenty Afghan guns. Baker also, by a turning movement to the left, drove the enemy from the field in this area with very heavy losses. Nek Muhammad, the leader of the force, had his horse shot under him but escaped. Again Roberts, by his determination to attack without waiting for the arrival of the whole of his force, won a complete victory. His casualties were negligible.

[1] Later Field-Marshal Sir George White.

Roberts enters Kabul on October 12.—The British force arrived before Kabul on October 8. Darkness prevented an immediate attack but, during the night, the enemy fled, leaving all their artillery, consisting of 150 guns, behind them.

The Abdication of Yakub Khan.—On October 12 the victorious general made his public entry into the city, and Yakub Khan, accompanied by only two followers, walked to the camp and abdicated. He said that his life had been a miserable one; that he would rather be a grass-cutter in the English camp than Amir of Afghanistan. He begged for permission to live in the camp until he could be sent to India.

The Proclamation of Roberts.—On October 28 the victor issued a proclamation by the terms of which he referred to the voluntary abdication of Yakub as having left Afghanistan without a Government, and stated "that the British Government, after consultation with the principal *Sirdars*, tribal chiefs, and others representing the interests and wishes of the various provinces and cities, will declare its will as to the permanent arrangements to be made for the good government of the people".[1]

The Reverse in the Chardeh Valley.—Roberts decided to occupy a fortified cantonment at Sherpur, which Shir Ali had partially constructed. It was strengthened in every possible way, while troops were despatched to the villages in the neighbourhood to procure supplies and firewood. Reconnoitring parties were also continually on the move. One of these, consisting of horse artillery and cavalry, was attacked by overwhelming numbers in the Chardeh Valley. The ground was cut up by deep irrigation channels impassable for the guns, which were temporarily abandoned. A disaster was only averted by the timely arrival of the 72nd Highlanders.

The Assault on the Sherpur Cantonment.—It was soon evident that overwhelming Afghan forces had assembled and Roberts decided to evacuate the Bala Hissar together with the city, and collected his force into the well-supplied cantonment. This retirement made a combined assault

[1] *Vide* Roberts, *op. cit.* vol. ii, p. 249.

by the assembled Afghans inevitable, and, at dawn on December 23, roused to religious fervour by a religious festival, they advanced in dense masses. Although faced by rifle and artillery the heroic tribesmen made attack after attack, only to suffer heavy losses. After the failure of these assaults a sortie by British cavalry and artillery completed their discomfiture. The Afghans, who can only carry food for a few days, had played into the hands of Roberts. They were beaten and speedily dispersed. Reinforcements strengthened his military position, but the political future of Afghanistan remained obscure. Who was to rule as Amir and would he rule over a disintegrated or a united country? The answer to this difficult problem was the reappearance of *Sirdar* Abdur Rahman in Afghan Turkistan.

CHAPTER XXXIX

ABDUR RAHMAN IS PROCLAIMED AMIR OF KABUL

To Allah alone are the gates of the hidden mysteries open; no man can know what is to happen in the future except Allah, the All-Knowing.—*The Koran.*

Thus is my banishment ended; it's twelve long years, well nigh,
Since I fought the last of my lost fights, and saw my best men die;
They hunted me over the passes, and up to the Oxus stream,
We had just touched land on the far side as we saw their spearheads gleam.

Then came the dolorous exile, the life in a conquered land,
Where the Frank had trodden on Islam; the alms at a stranger's hand;
While here in the fort of my fathers, my bitterest foe held sway;
He was ten years building his Kingdom, it all fell down in a day.

LYALL.

The Early Years of Abdur Rahman.—Abdur Rahman, "the Slave of the Merciful," destined to rank as the great Amir, who welded the loose congeries of turbulent tribes into a nation and ruled with a rod of steel over a united Afghanistan, had a chequered career, which is well worth narrating, if only as demonstrating how his character was strengthened by constant changes of fortune, and hardened on the anvil of adversity.[1]

He was, as mentioned in Chapter XXXIV, the son of *Sirdar* Afzal Khan who, by the death of two elder brothers, became the eldest son of Dost Muhammad. His mother was the daughter of *Nawab* Samand Khan, a leading *Sirdar*, and was a descendant of Shah Tahmasp.

Abdur Rahman was born in 1844 and, for the first nine years of his life, resided at Kabul. He then joined his father, who was Governor of Afghan Turkistan. There he lived for ten years, during which period his

[1] In this section I have consulted *The Life of Abdur Rahman*, and the *Encyclopaedia of Islam.* Vol. I of the former work is a translation of Abdur Rahman's autobiography. Sir Louis Dane has, very kindly, read this and the following eight chapters, and has made valuable suggestions.

training resembled that of a medieval European of noble family. In other words, he spent most of his time in sport and warlike exercises, and could only read and write with difficulty.

When he was thirteen years of age, Afzal visited Kabul to pay his respects to Dost Muhammad and his youthful son was left to act as Governor in his place.

His Appointment to Tashkurgan.—Shortly afterwards, he was appointed Governor of Tashkurgan by his grandfather. This appointment he held for some two years, reducing the revenues in case of failure in the crops and, generally speaking, ruling with leniency. But his father, who visited the province, after inspecting the revenue accounts, refused these concessions and insisted on full payment of the taxes. The young *Sirdar* therefore resigned the governorship and returned to Takhtapul, where his father had built a palace and established his family. He now returned to his studies, but secured physical fitness by hunting for two days a week in the jungles of the Oxus, or fishing on the river of Balkh.

His Training under Campbell.—At this period he fell under the influence of Campbell, Shah Shuja's able general, who, as mentioned in Chapter XXIX, had been taken prisoner at Kandahar in 1834. Converted to Islam, he became the Commander of Afzal's army under the name of Shir Muhammad Khan. The young *Sirdar* rightly admired Campbell whom he describes as, "a very clever military officer, as well as a good doctor. His character was most heroic." For three years he "continued to be trained in surgery and military tactics", and there is no doubt that he profited greatly by the instruction he received from Campbell. He also learned to do blacksmith's work and, to quote again, "I acquired the art of riflemaking, and I made three complete double rifles with my own hands".

His Imprisonment by Afzal Khan.—His father must have been a singularly harsh parent for, hearing from a relation that his son drank wine and smoked Indian hemp, he believed the charge, and continually found fault with him. Abdur Rahman thereupon determined

to run away to Herat. This design having been betrayed by his servants, he was thrown into prison with chains on his ankles and, in this unhappy position, he languished for one year.

Upon the death of Campbell, Afzal wished to appoint one of his trusted followers to the post. But to quote yet again, " he refused to accept it, saying to my father that his own son, who had been one year in prison, and therefore punished sufficiently for his faults, was the proper person to take the place of Shir Muhammad Khan. My father at first refused . . . but being urged to give me a trial, he finally consented to send for me. I came straight from prison to appear before my father . . . with chains around my ankles. My father addressed himself to all the military officers saying, ' I appoint this my lunatic son to be General over you '. To which they replied: ' God forbid that your son should be a lunatic: we know well that he is wise and sensible, you also will find this out, and will prove that it is disloyal people who give him a bad character '."

His Appointment as Commander-in-Chief.—In this manner, the earliest crisis in Abdur Rahman's life, which might well have been a story taken from the *Arabian Nights*, ended satisfactorily. Thanks to his energy and powers of organization, his father not only forgave him, but, realizing his capacity, appointed him Commander-in-Chief of the entire army, which represented a force of 30,000 officers and men of all arms, of whom one-half were regulars.

The Annexation of Kataghan.—At this period, Dost Muhammad determined to annex the petty Khanates on the left bank of the Oxus and Abdur Rahman, who acted as Commander-in-Chief, under his uncle Azim Khan, invaded the neighbouring province of Kataghan. Its ruler, the *Mir Atalik*,[1] as he was termed, had appealed for help to the Amir of Bukhara, who had " sent him a flag and a tent, telling him to erect the tent in his country, with the flag in front, to frighten the Afghans ".

[1] The term means " Lord Fatherhead ". Yakub Beg, who conquered Chinese Turkistan in 1865, was given the title of *Atalik Ghazi* by the Amir of Bukhara.

Abdur Rahman marched on Ghori which was held by a strong force, while the *Mir Atalik* " showed himself with 40,000 sowars from the top of an adjacent hill, to encourage his soldiers in the fort ". However, the Afghan troops, under cover of a heavy cannonade, stormed the outer fort and, following close on its escaping defenders, took possession of the *bazar*. Thereupon the main fort, which had only been provisioned for ten days, surrendered.

The Amir of Bukhara crosses the Oxus.—The Amir of Bukhara, at this period, decided to take a hand in the game in the interests of the *Mir* of Badakhshan, and crossed the Oxus with a large force. The situation was difficult, since it was possible that the Uzbegs of Afghan Turkistan, who were of the same nationality, would rebel, while there was also the possibility, if not the likelihood, of the Amir of Bukhara making a sudden attack on the Afghans. In the event, Abdur Rahman, while marching to the support of his uncle, heard artillery fire. This was taken to signify the revolt of the Uzbegs and caused great alarm among his soldiers; actually it was a *feu de joie*, fired by Azim Khan, to celebrate the flight of the Amir of Bukhara!

The Succession of Shir Ali Khan in 1863.—Upon the death of Dost Muhammad in 1863, Shir Ali, as we have seen, succeeded his father, but his elder brothers rebelled. Azim, who was Governor of Kurram, was defeated and fled to India, while Afzal was imprisoned.

The Flight of Abdur Rahman to Bukhara.—Abdur Rahman, when summoned by Shir Ali, took refuge with Muzaffar-ud-Din, the Amir of Bukhara, who, according to the *Sirdar's* own account, did not treat him with the honour which he considered to be his due, or indeed with the hospitality that is usual among Moslems. Consequently, he bluntly refused to accept a position at the Amir's Court. This brought him into disfavour, but, upon news being received that the Russians had captured Tashkent, the Amir of Bukhara, in much alarm, left for Samarkand.

The Return of Abdur Rahman and his Defeat by Shir Ali.—The young *Sirdar*, thereupon, decided to recross

the Oxus into Afghan Turkistan, where he was welcomed by the troops. But the struggle with Shir Ali, as mentioned in Chapter XXXIV, ended in his final defeat in January 1869. After this disaster, accompanied by his uncle and some faithful followers, he started on a long weary journey round Afghanistan to Samarkand.

Among the most interesting of his experiences is the following: "The first night I entered the Wazir country, I had eaten nothing since my defeat, and I told my sowars that I was very hungry, and should much like a piece of meat. They had one piece of money between them, and with this they bought some mutton, butter and onions. . . . My men managed to procure an iron saucepan, and in this I cooked some of the meat, making also some gravy. I had been obliged to tie the saucepan to some sticks to hang it over the fire, and as I was going to take the cooked meat out of the saucepan, a dog, thinking the hanging string was the intestines of some animal, seized it in his mouth and ran off with the whole thing. . . . Three days before I had 1000 camels to carry my cooking utensils, and now one dog could run off with my cooking pans, together with the food." [1]

While travelling along the Indian frontier Amir Azim received a letter from two English officers inviting him to take refuge in British territory. He replied, according to the autobiography: "When the Viceroy of India writes me a letter of invitation, promising not to take us beyond the Indus, we will come. To this letter he asked me to affix my seal, but I refused, saying I had never seen the benefit of English friendship." Actually, I imagine that shrewd Abdur Rahman wished to take refuge at a convenient point from which he could watch events in Afghan Turkistan, where most of his adherents were to be found. That fact, rather than any dislike of the English, probably decided his refusal.

Leaving the Wazir country in March, the refugees proceeded to the Zhob Valley and Pishin, and passing through Nushki, struck the Helmand, suffering consider-

[1] In Chapter XII, a similar story is told of Amr-ul-Lais, and it rather looks as if Abdur Rahman had heard of it !

able hardships from lack of supplies, from the soaking rain and the bitter winds. Reaching Chagai with men and horses exhausted, they stayed there for twenty-five days and grazed their beasts. Resuming the journey, the Helmand was struck and, meeting a band of raiders from Persian Seistan, Abdur Rahman made friends with them and on reaching the delta province, the party was hospitably entertained by *Mir* Alum Khan of Kain, who was, as we have seen, discourteous to Sir Frederic Goldsmid and the officers of the Seistan mission.

Once in Persia, the hardships of the refugees were finished for the time being, and the *Sirdars* travelled to Meshed, the sacred city of Persia and the capital of Khurasan, where they were received with much honour.

The Shah invited Abdur Rahman to visit him at Tehran, but he asked to be allowed to proceed to Urganj or Khiva. This was permitted, and leaving Azim (who shortly afterwards died), in charge of his Meshed hosts, Abdur Rahman continued his wanderings to Darragaz. There his hospitable host arranged for his safety while crossing the Turkoman country, by holding as security one thousand camel loads belonging to Turkoman merchants.

Passing through Askabad and Tejen, the wanderers crossed the grim Kara Kum desert, again undergoing severe hardships from thirst, and finally reached Khiva. In this fertile oasis the ruler, *Sayyid* Muhammad Rahim Khan, who was truly hospitable, "told me that he regarded me as his elder brother, as his father Muhammad Amin was most friendly to my father. . . . He offered me two of the seven cities now under his rule." Abdur Rahman, in return for this generous proposal, strongly advised the *Khan* to make terms with Russia, but his people cried: "Death awaits the Russians if they come near Urganj".

Abdur Rahman again visits Bukhara.—Continuing his wanderings the *Sirdar* crossed the Oxus and reached Kara Kul in Bukharan territory, where he was greeted by his cousin Ishak Khan (son of *Sirdar* Azim) and by his servants. He was received by the Amir of Bukhara at

Hissar, where he remained for a few days, making little comment on his reception which was cool.

Abdur Rahman and General Kaufmann, 1870.—The wanderer then travelled to Samarkand, now a Russian possession, where he was kindly received by the Russian authorities. In due course he paid a visit to the Governor-General at Tashkent. So far as his correspondence proves, Kaufmann behaved honestly on this occasion in his dealings with the Afghan *Sirdar*. Abdur Rahman tried hard to persuade him that it was absolutely necessary for the interests of Russia that he should be assisted to become Amir of Afghanistan. Kaufmann's reply was that he had been given hospitality in consideration of his destitute condition; that the relations of Russia with Great Britain were friendly and that he wished Shir Ali a prosperous reign.[1]

It was finally decided that Abdur Rahman should be provided with a house and garden at Samarkand, and there he lived, supported by an allowance from his hosts, from 1870 to 1880. He had settled down in the best centre for watching events in Afghanistan, and for eleven years he watched and intrigued with the Chiefs across the Oxus and with merchants who visited him. In concluding this account of the early years of Abdur Rahman's chequered career, it is impossible not to admire the courage and humour which he displayed under conditions that would have crushed most men. His autobiography certainly bears comparison with the famous memoirs of the Emperor Baber.

Abdur Rahman decides to return to Afghanistan.—In his autobiography Abdur Rahman writes : "After two years of my stay in Samarkand, the friendship of the Afghans and the Russians grew stronger and stronger, and the communication between Shir Ali and the Government became more frequent. I discovered that Muhammad Alam Khan, Governor of Balkh, was in the habit of sending envoys to the Amir of Bukhara, who forwarded these letters to General Abramoff and to the

[1] An extract of Kaufmann's letter of June 29 to Prince Gortchakoff was shown to the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg.

Viceroy of Tashkent. The Russians would reply to the letters through the same medium."

The *Sirdar* was naturally excited by the tragedy at Kabul, which resulted in the flight and death of Shir Ali and the elimination of Yakub and Ayub. He decided to return to Afghanistan immediately, and began to make preparations.

The Encouragement of Abdur Rahman by Russia.—It is interesting to note that the *Sirdar* was encouraged to return to Afghanistan at this juncture. He describes how, in the absence of Kaufmann at Orenburg, his secretary not only permitted but urged him to take advantage of the favourable opportunity. He was, by permission of Kaufmann, also given 200 breach-loading rifles with ammunition and some money. He writes: "The Russians pressed me most strongly to leave. They said I could not leave soon enough."

This probably constitutes an accurate account of what happened, and Lord Dufferin pointed out to M. de Giers that the Russian Government, while professing its desire to reassure Great Britain as to its pacific intentions in Central Asia, in the person of Abdur Rahman, had launched a new element of disturbance into Afghanistan at a critical period.

Abdur Rahman travels to Badakhshan.—Acting promptly, the *Sirdar* borrowed "2000 sovereigns from the merchants", purchased horses and equipment and proceeded to Khojand where he bought some thirty pack ponies. From Khojand he made for Badakhshan, but attempting the most direct route: "I found the mountain like a hen's egg, being white with snow. It was so high I was afraid we should never reach the top, but I put my trust in Allah, and we began the ascent . . . allowing our horses to go in front, and held on to their tails to help us up." Having crossed this pass at great risk, and with some cases of frost-bite among his adherents, Abdur Rahman was informed that there were "four more mountains" between him and Hissar. Accordingly he decided to make for Shahr-i-Sabz where, by orders of the Amir of Bukhara who was always

his enemy, the city gates were closed against him. Moving on to Hissar, by a ruse, which he describes with glee, he secured six horses belonging to the "chiefs holding civil appointments in the city". He then crossed the Oxus and reached Rustak, a village of Badakhshan.

His reception in Badakhshan by *Shahzadeh* Hassan, son of *Mir* Shah — the latter was brother of *Mir* Jahandar Shah, his father-in-law[1]—was hardly encouraging, since he was informed that the people of Badakhshan "had vowed that if a piece of their land was touched by the feet of an Afghan, they would throw that piece of land out of the country as well as myself, as being impure".

To continue: "The next morning putting my trust in Allah, I started to face the army of *Shahzadeh* Hassan. After a march of twelve miles, I saw the enemy, 12,000 strong with twelve flags in their midst, coming towards me. When we arrived about the distance of a mile apart, I saw to my astonishment that the enemy began to disperse gradually in different directions, as if under the influence of an evil spirit. I could not understand what had happened. In the meantime, a body of sowars belonging to the *Mir* of Badakhshan, the cousin of *Shahzadeh* Hassan was approaching from another direction, praising Allah. . . . They told me they had come to salaam Abdur Rahman."

After these truly amazing events, Abdur Rahman issued the following proclamation: "O Moslems, I have not come to fight Afghans who are true believers, but to make *ghaza*. Therefore it is necessary that you should all obey my commands, which are those of Allah and his prophets. We are all the slaves of Allah, but *ghaza* is a duty to us all." After a second dramatic event, which proved the steadfast courage and strong personality of Abdur Rahman, we find the troops of Afghan Tukistan coming over to him and "giving banquets in their joy".

At this juncture, Abdur Rahman, who was inspecting

[1] Mir Jahandar Shah was murdered by his sons in Russian territory. They were imprisoned by the Russians, but Abdur Rahman secured their release.

the artillery, was surprised to see a suppliant, who had thrown himself at his feet. This was Muhammad Sarwar, who had deserted him at Samarkand. He was the bearer of a letter from Mr. (later Sir Lepel) Griffin, the Chief Political Officer at Kabul, which ran: "It has become known that you have entered Afghanistan and consequently this letter is sent to you by a confidential messenger, in order that you may submit to the British officers at Kabul any representations that you may desire to make to the British Government with regard to your object in entering Afghanistan". Muhammad Sarwar was instructed to inform his late master that the British were able to benefit him much more than the Russians, and that he would be wise to open up relations with them. He was also instructed to point out that the British had no intention of annexing the country and that their chief desire was to see a strong and friendly Amir firmly established at Kabul. The astute *Sirdar* read "the letter out loud and asked the chiefs to help him to compose an answer since he did not wish", he declared, "to do anything without first consulting them". Their answers were hostile to the British and, accordingly, Abdur Rahman before them all drafted his reply, which was complimentary and vague, declaring that his only intention in leaving Russia was to help his nation, which was in a state of much perplexity and trouble. Upon hearing this reply, "on the oath of Allah and their Prophet, they invested me with full authority to write what I thought fit".

The Arrival of Abdur Rahman in Afghan Turkistan reported to the British.—The news of the arrival of Abdur Rahman in Afghan Turkistan reached the British through a Reuter's telegram of January 7, 1880, according to which he was reported to be at Balkh. The reaction to this important intelligence in Afghanistan was that Shir Ali Khan, the *Wali* of Kandahar, evinced unfeigned alarm and stated that Abdur Rahman would be welcomed at Herat both by the garrison and the inhabitants. Stewart agreed with this view, but Roberts, while reporting that many Chiefs in Kabul would dislike his

appearance at that city, remarked that he was considered to be a capable soldier and an exceptionally resolute man.

The Action of Mr. Lepel Griffin.—The Indian authorities considered that the *Sirdar* might possibly be a suitable ruler for Northern Afghanistan and, upon inquiry, ascertained from his mother, who was residing at Kandahar, that he might be disposed to negotiate with the British. At this juncture, authentic information reached Kabul on March 25 that Abdur Rahman had won over the troops in Afghan Turkistan and had been joined by the Chief of Badakhshan. Griffin immediately decided to take action and, on April 2, despatched Muhammad Sarwar with the letter given above.

The Letter of Abdur Rahman.—On April 21, the friendly but guarded reply of Abdur Rahman was received. It gave a sketch of recent events in Afghanistan, severely blaming Yakub Khan who "raised fools to power until two ignorant men directed the affairs of Afghanistan which during the reign of my grandfather . . . was bright like the day". It ended up with the wish that "you will permanently establish the Afghans under the honorable protection of the two Powers". Muhammad Sarwar, however, reported that the *Sirdar* was anxious for the friendship of the British, while, at the same time, acknowledging his obligations to Russia.

The Chief Opponents of Abdur Rahman.—The Ghilzais, whose centre was Ghazni, were known to be openly hostile to Abdur Rahman. Consequently Griffin decided to receive a deputation from that city which petitioned for the restoration of Yakub Khan. At the durbar held on this occasion Griffin declared that the British Government would not restore Yakub Khan, but would recognize as Amir of Kabul the Chief who was desired by the people of Afghanistan.

The March of Sir Donald Stewart from Kandahar to Kabul.—At this juncture, Stewart was ordered to march his division, which was between 7000 and 8000 strong, to Ghazni, the intention at that period being to withdraw it to India by the Kurram Valley. Leaving Kandahar

early in April 1880, hostile tribesmen in large numbers were reported by the scouts to be advancing parallel to the British force at a distance of some miles from the right flank of the column. On April 14 the route passed through low hills which bordered it for some distance and then bent round eastwards across it. This position was seen to be strongly held by the enemy along a front of about two miles.

The Battle of Ahmad Khel, 1880.—The British force advanced and, upon the guns opening fire, successive waves of *Ghazis* swiftly charged downhill, stretching beyond either flank of the British, while a large body of horsemen threatened the left and rear. The Afghan cavalry charged, and at first, on the left flank, threw back the 19th Bengal Lancers, who had to charge uphill to meet them. Meanwhile the Afghan footmen pressed on with such fanatical valour, that neither the guns firing case nor the heavy fire of the infantry seemed able to stop their rush. The situation became critical. However, the arrival of further troops at the front and the steady fire of the guns and infantry, which mowed down the *Ghazis* by hundreds, finally broke their charge. The defeated tribesmen moved along the hills to the west, where they came under the fire of the heavy battery and, after an engagement lasting just one hour, "cease fire" was sounded.

The Account of the Battle given by Lieutenant Hamilton, R.A.—An interesting description of this battle by Lieutenant P. F. P. Hamilton merits quotation: "Sir Donald Stewart never expected the enemy to take the initiative as they did, and it was for that reason that our battery was ordered to take up a position at about 1500 yards, and not to open fire, but to wait for the infantry to form line. . . . Hardly had we unlimbered and come into action, than the mass of the enemy advanced boldly down, and at a great pace, and we then discovered that they formed the centre of a long line which was concealed by the intervening *nalas*. Throwing forward their flanks, and speedily assuming a semicircular shape, they proceeded to envelop us. You will see how quickly we have

to change our ranges. After we had been firing for about five minutes, G/4 Field Battery galloped into action on our left, and the two escort companies who also arrived at this time, commenced firing very rapid volleys on the left of G/4. Altogether twelve field guns were making most excellent practice, and the two companies were laying many low before them, but their advance was in no way checked. . . . We were obliged to retire, but after taking up their new position, the two batteries soon cleared their front, and there was a ghastly pile of dead heaped on the ground we had just left." This account ends with the remark: " I only saw two Afghans ask for mercy, and one cannot help admiring their reckless bravery; and the way, and order, in which they advanced, deserved success ".[1]

The Afghan force, estimated at 15,000, consisted mainly of Ghilzais, but there was also a large contingent of Durranis from Zamindawar. They possessed but two guns. The loss of the enemy was more than one thousand killed. The British losses were negligible. Thus ended the engagement of Ahmad Khel, in which British superior armament and discipline overthrew the heroic Ghilzais and Durranis, whose bravery, as Hamilton declares, merits the highest praise.

Resuming the march, Ghazni was reached on April 21. Here Stewart received orders to proceed to Kabul and assume supreme command. While halting at Ghazni a second tribal gathering was attacked and dispersed, heavy losses being inflicted on the enemy.

Roberts despatches Supplies under an Escort to meet Stewart.—It had been arranged that Roberts should despatch a convoy to meet the Kandahar force. This he did on April 16 with a small column to serve as escort under Major-General Ross. This column, while on the march forty miles from Ghazni, on April 22, sighted heliograph flashes on Shir Dahan, a pass 8300 feet in height, and was able to open up communication with

[1] Letters from Lieut. P. F. P. Hamilton, R.H. Artillery, and Lieut. E. O. F. Hamilton, 2nd Queen's Royal Regt., 1881. These letters were printed for private circulation.

Stewart by heliograph, which thus, for the first time, proved its military value.

Roberts despatches two Columns to meet Stewart.—Roberts was informed that the Logaris of Charasia were bitterly hostile to Abdur Rahman, and accordingly despatched a second column 1200 strong under Colonel Jenkins to prevent them from joining in an attack on Ross as was their undoubted intention. Jenkins, on reaching Charasia, reported that he was about to be attacked by the Logaris under Muhammad Hasan Khan in great force. Roberts thereupon immediately despatched Brigadier-General Macpherson to the assistance of Jenkins with another force of all arms of about the same strength, while Brigadier-General Hugh Gough with the Cavalry brigade took up a position half-way between Kabul and Charasia. The event proved the wisdom of these precautions. Macpherson, upon reaching the high ground beyond the *Sang-i-Nawishta* gorge, saw that Jenkins was being hard pressed by a force which had formed a semicircle round his column. He promptly attacked and scattered the Logaris.

Stewart's Arrival at Kabul.—Stewart finally reached Kabul on May 2, and there is no doubt that the arrival of his division and even more the crushing defeat of the Ghilzais, followed by the punishment inflicted on other tribes hostile to Abdur Rahman, effected more than any other actions could have done to "make straight the way" for the *Sirdar*.

A Liberal Government comes into Power.—The arrival at Kabul of Stewart coincided with a change of Government in Great Britain. Mr. Gladstone succeeded Lord Beaconsfield as Prime Minister, while Lord Ripon was appointed Viceroy of India, but did not actually assume office until June.

The Decisions of Lord Lytton.—At the end of April 1880, Lord Lytton laid down that the question of a joint protectorate by Great Britain and Russia could not be considered and that that Power had repeatedly renewed the assurances solemnly given to the British Government that "Russia considered Afghanistan to lie

entirely beyond the sphere of her influence". As to the Kandahar question, he stated that the objects of the Second Afghan War were (*a*) to avenge the treacherous massacre of the British Mission at Kabul, and (*b*) to maintain the safeguards of the treaty of Gandamak by the provision of more substantial guarantees. These two objects had been attained; the first by the capture of Kabul and the punishment of the crime; and the second by the severance of the province of Kandahar. He added that Shir Ali Khan, the *Wali* of Kandahar, had been recognised by the British Government as the ruler of that province and would be maintained in this position.

His Invitation to Abdur Rahman.—With special reference to Abdur Rahman's letter, Lord Lytton considered that the natural repugnance expressed by the *Sirdar* to accept conditions which might make him appear ungrateful to Russia "whose salt he had eaten", did him credit. He also laid down that neither the districts ceded by the Treaty of Gandamak, nor any portion of the Kandahar province would ever be restored to the ruler of Kabul; and that the question of Herat had been taken over by Her Majesty's Government, with whose views the Government of India was not yet acquainted. On the other hand the *Sirdar* was to be informed that Kabul would be evacuated in October and that it was desired to transfer to his authority the whole of the country which would be evacuated. Finally, Abdur Rahman was invited to proceed to Kabul and thus facilitate the arrangements for effecting the transfer of authority to him.

The Question of Herat.—The question of the Herat province may perhaps be suitably dealt with at this point. Lord Salisbury, in the spring of 1879, recommended making a rectification of the Perso-Afghan frontier one of the conditions of peace, upon the conclusion of the Second Afghan War by the Treaty of Gandamak.

The Persian Minister in London pressed for the cession of Herat, but our representative at Tehran pointed out that Persia's occupation of the province

would only open the door to Russia. He was not, however, opposed to the cession of Afghan Seistan, which the Persian Government was also most anxious to secure. The Government of India expressed their opinion that these proposals would alienate the Kabul Government and give offence, so far as the question of Herat was concerned, to Russia.

The Foreign Office was, however, inclined to agree to the above cessions, provided that the British should insist upon the right of military occupation of Herat, in case of certain eventualities; that a number of British officers should also be employed in the garrison of Herat; and finally, that the question of opening the Karun River to navigation should be raised. In December 1879, the British Government, considering the disintegration of Afghanistan certain, agreed to the Herat province being ceded to Persia, subject to the above conditions. The Shah accepted and expressed gratification but, in February 1880, under Russian influence, His Majesty refused to accept Herat under any other conditions than of permanent occupation. As a result, this question, together with that of handing over Afghan Seistan to Persia, was dropped.

Had this policy been carried out, the Afghans would have been permanently estranged, while it was known that Russia would have strongly resented any such cession without her wishes being consulted. It is also clear that Russian influence would have penetrated to the frontiers of India.

The Second Letter of Abdur Rahman.—Abdur Rahman, as we have seen, had a very difficult game to play in view of the turbulent, suspicious and fanatical people with whom he had to justify each step he took. He thus desired further information: What would be the boundaries of his dominions? Would a European representative or a British force remain in Afghanistan? What enemy of the British would he be called upon to repel? And what benefits would the British Government confer on him and his country?

The Views of the Gladstone Government.—At this

juncture the views of the new Government reached India. It was pointed out that the sole result of two successful campaigns was the dismemberment of a state which it was in the interests of India to see strong, friendly and independent. It was decided that Lytton's policy of disintegration was to be replaced by one of reconstruction, which included the reversal of the scheme for separating the province of Kandahar from Kabul. It was also pointed out that the strategical value of Kandahar existed only in connexion with a system of frontier defence, much more extensive than any that was now required; that the *Wali* could not maintain his position without British financial and military assistance, and that finally the financial burden of retaining the province with its ill-defined boundaries would be intolerable. To give the views, expressed by other authorities, Roberts had declared that our grasp on Kandahar should never be loosened, but Sir Garnet Wolseley considered that although we were bound to occupy Kandahar if Russia marched on Herat, no military advantage was secured by its present retention.

Sir Lepel Griffin receives Abdur Rahman.—To return to Abdur Rahman, Roberts and Griffin, in view of his proclamation in Badakhshan, entertained grave suspicions of the honesty of the *Sirdar*. The Government of India, however, ordered the negotiations to continue and, in July, Abdur Rahman, whose following, according to his autobiography, included about 300,000 *Ghazis*—an impossible number to feed—reached Kuhistan, one stage to north of Kabul. Griffin held a formal durbar in this district, at which Abdur Rahman was received with honour. Griffin's report to Stewart ran: "Abdur Rahman Khan is a man of about forty, of middle height, and rather stout. He has an exceedingly intelligent face, brown eyes, a pleasant smile, and a frank, courteous manner. The impression that he left on me and on the officers who were present at the interview, was most favourable: he kept thoroughly to the point under discussion, and his remarks were characterized by shrewdness and ability. He appeared animated by a sincere desire

to be on cordial terms with the British Government."

These negotiations ended in a letter from the British proposing that a public announcement of his recognition as Amir of Kabul should be made by them. To this Abdur Rahman replied in a letter which ended: "I accept from you and from the Viceroy of India, the Amirship of Afghanistan ".

Abdur Rahman is proclaimed Amir of Kabul.—At a durbar held at Kabul on July 22, 1880, *Sirdar* Abdur Rahman was formally acknowledged and recognized by the British Government as Amir of Kabul. On the following day the *khutba* was read in his name and the Chief *Kazi* reviewing the whole course of British relations with Afghanistan, eulogized their action in restoring a Moslem ruler to a country, of which they were in military possession.

The accession of Abdur Rahman, although, as we have seen, it was opposed by a powerful party was, generally speaking, hailed with enthusiasm, and helped materially to quiet the widespread unrest prevailing in the country. It also clearly demonstrated the sincerity of the British Government.

The Memorandum of Obligation, July 1880.—The new Amir was most anxious that the British Government should negotiate a treaty with him, but this was refused for the time being, on the grounds that his position was not sufficiently consolidated. A Memorandum of Obligation was, however, granted, by the terms of which, the British Government stated that it had no desire to interfere in the internal government of Afghanistan, nor to appoint a British Resident, but that, under agreement, it would appoint a Moslem Agent. It laid down that, since both Russia and Persia were pleased to abstain from all interference with the affairs of Afghanistan, it was obvious that the Amir could have no political relations with any foreign Power, except with the British Government. Finally, to quote from the document: "If any foreign Power should attempt to interfere in Afghanistan, and if such interference should lead to unprovoked aggression on the dominions of your

Highness, in that event the British Government would be prepared to aid you to such extent and in such manner as may appear to the British Government necessary in repelling it, provided that your Highness follows unreservedly the advice of the British Government in regard to your external relations". Financial assistance was, at first, given to the extent of 20 lakhs[1] of rupees.

The Evacuation of Afghanistan by the British Army.—Arrangements had been made for the British army to evacuate Afghanistan by the Khaibar Pass and the Kurram Valley when, on July 28, news reached Kabul of the crushing defeat by Ayub Khan of a British force at Maiwand. Before, however, dealing with this disaster, which was met by the despatch southward of a strong column under Roberts on August 8, it is to be noted that the Amir occupied Kabul on August 11, and that the British troops under Stewart marched back to India without a single shot being fired at them. Amir Abdur Rahman Khan was left to make good his position at Kabul.

The Mistaken Policy of Ayub Khan.—Looking back on the courageous initiative displayed by Abdur Rahman, who was only supported by a handful of followers, it is clear that Ayub Khan, who governed Herat with a powerful force supported by modern artillery, held practically all the cards and should have attacked his only rival as soon as he crossed the Oxus. He would surely have defeated him and, in view of British anxiety to evacuate Afghanistan, he would have been able to make terms and be acknowledged as Amir. Instead of taking this obvious step, Ayub attacked the British, by whom he was finally defeated and driven into exile. He played his very strong hand extremely badly.

[1] A lakh of rupees was worth about £8250 at this period.

CHAPTER XL

THE BATTLES OF MAIWAND AND KANDAHAR

I have it on the authority of a Colonel of Ayub Khan's army, who was present at the time, that a party of the 66th regiment, which he estimated at one hundred officers and men, made a most determined stand. They were surrounded by the whole of the Afghan army, and fought on until only eleven men were left, inflicting enormous losses. These eleven men charged out of the garden, and died, fighting to the death.—From the Report of GENERAL PRIMROSE, dated Oct. 1, 1880.

Ayub Khan's Intention to attack Kandahar.—Before dealing with the attack made on Kandahar by Ayub Khan in the summer of 1880, it is desirable to give some account of the circumstances which led up to it.[1]

Early in 1879, when his brother Yakub Khan succeeded his father, Ayub was appointed Governor of Herat. He was an exile in Persia at this period, having taken refuge with the Shah some five years previously, when his brother had been imprisoned by Shir Ali. Established at Herat, Ayub carried on constant intrigues with the Shah, who, as mentioned in the last chapter, was employing every possible means to secure the province of Herat and also Afghan Seistan. In November 1879 the British Minister at Tehran was shown a telegram sent to the Persian Foreign Secretary in which Ayub declared his determination to proclaim *jihad* and to march on Kandahar. However, mutinies and a fight between the Kabuli and Herati regiments delayed matters, but the Kabuli troops were anxious to return home, while many of his chief advisers were connected with Kandahar, and were equally anxious to return to that city as

[1] I have consulted *The Second Afghan War* (official account); *The Second Afghan War*, by Colonel H. B. Hanna, 1810; "E/B R.H.A. at Maiwand", by Captain H. B. Latham (*Journal of the Royal Artillery*, vol. lv, No. 3, Oct. 1928); *The Royal Berkshire Regiment*, by F. Loraine Petre. Major Lynch, the last surviving officer of the 66th, has given me an especially vivid account of the battle, from which I am quoting.

conquerors. The unjustifiable departure of Stewart's division from Kandahar in April exposed the military weakness of the British, and was probably the deciding factor for Ayub and his advisers.

The March of the Wali *to Girishk.*—Upon hearing of Ayub's departure from Herat, Shir Ali marched his army, which consisted of 2000 infantry, 1000 cavalry and 6 smooth-bore guns, to Girishk, situated on the right bank of the Helmand. There, realizing the danger of his force deserting to the enemy, he appealed for support to the Government of India, and this it was decided to afford him.

The Military Position at Kandahar.—The military position at Kandahar was unsatisfactory. Lieutenant-General J. M. Primrose, who assumed command in Southern Afghanistan after the departure of Stewart, had long lines of communication which were constantly being attacked. He also had a detachment, 1000 strong, at Kalat-i-Ghilzai, which should have reinforced Kandahar. So difficult was the position in Baluchistan that the only reinforcement which reached Kandahar was a single Bombay regiment. The total of the force at this city was under 5000 men.

The news of the advance of Ayub Khan spread like wildfire; ominous reports of the assembling of large bodies of *Ghazis* were received, while the *Wali's* troops were mutinous. Brigadier-General G. R. S. Burrows was accordingly ordered by Primrose to march his brigade to the Helmand. His force consisted of the 66th regiment, 500 strong, native infantry, 1300 strong, with a battery of the Royal Horse Artillery and some 600 cavalry. The total of all ranks was 2500.

Burrows left Kandahar on July 4, and upon reaching the Helmand a week later, camped opposite Girishk. It was hoped that the despatch of a British brigade to the Helmand would not only steady the *Wali's* force but would check the progress of Ayub Khan, since it might lead to the Kabuli troops breaking up and making for their homes. The alternative of awaiting the enemy at Kandahar would have allowed Ayub Khan to avoid that

city and strike at Kalat-i-Ghilzai, and at Ghazni. The effect of such inaction would, consequently, have been damaging to the political and military situation. The Government of India practically decided that Ayub must be attacked.

The Army of the Wali *deserts to Ayub Khan.*—The troops of the *Wali*, who had been mutinous for some time, deserted in a body to the enemy on July 11, taking with them their guns and ammunition. The cavalry alone remained loyal until it had escorted the Governor and his treasure to the British camp, but the force then broke up and made off towards Kandahar. The British mounted troops pursued the main body of the mutineers and, in spite of the difficult terrain, captured their guns and a quantity of ammunition. The captured battery consisted of four 6-pdr. smooth-bore guns and two 12-pdr. howitzers. These guns were taken over by a detachment of the 66th regiment, which had been previously trained in gun drill. Unfortunately the supply of ammunition was small.

The British retire to Kushk-i-Nakhud.—This mutiny completely altered the military and political situation. The Helmand was now fordable everywhere; behind the British force was a desert twenty-five miles wide, while supplies were difficult to procure. Consequently it was decided to retire to Kushk-i-Nakhud, which directly covered Kandahar from the Girishk direction, but not from a northerly route *via* Maiwand. It was a fertile centre.

Unreliable Information as to Ayub's Movements.—The movements of Ayub's main body were not known with any accuracy, and Colonel St. John, the political officer, urged Burrows to march on Maiwand, assuring him that he would anticipate Ayub's army by at least a day. Since Maiwand was a stage nearer to Kandahar, Burrows decided to act on this information.

The British Troops march on Maiwand.—On July 26 the troops spent the night in breaking up their standing camp. Consequently it was a tired force which marched off early on the following day encumbered by an un-

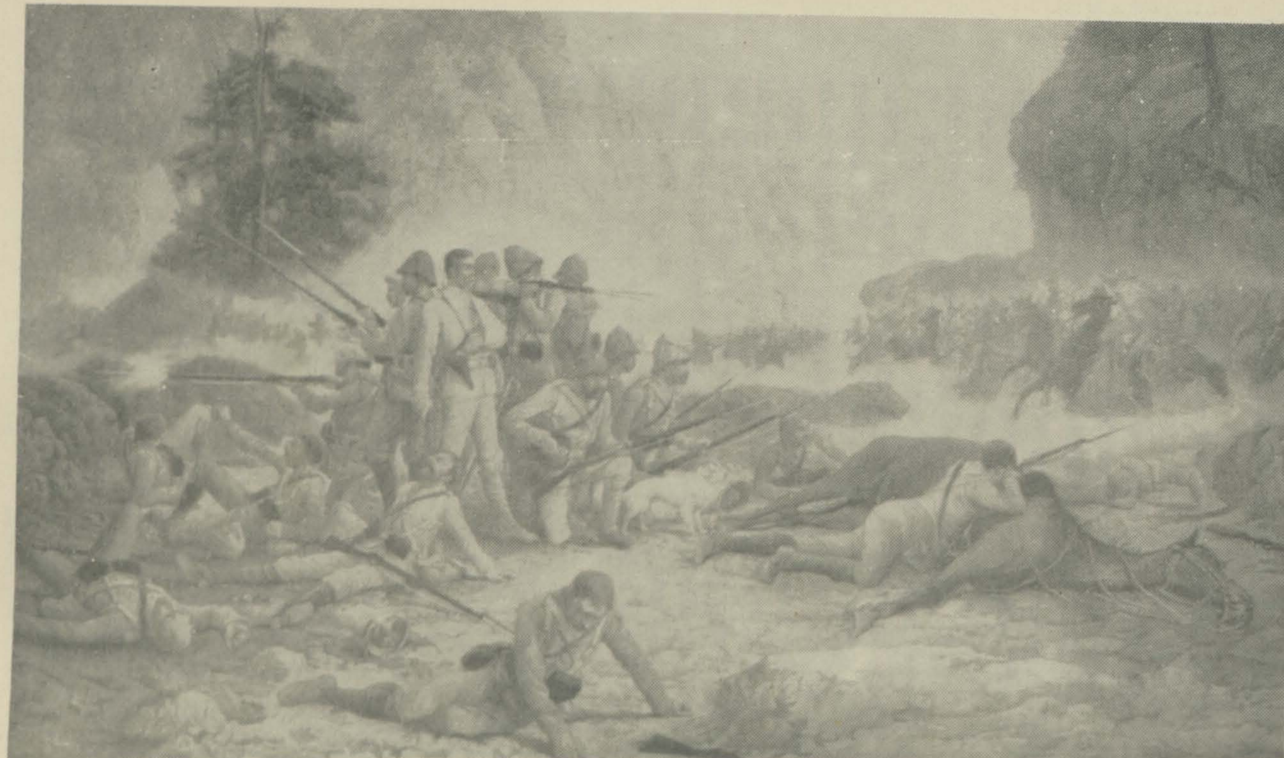
wieldy baggage column which absorbed a guard of 200 infantry.

At 10 A.M., when the troops halted for an hour near a supply of water, it was reported by a spy that Ayub had already occupied Maiwand—evidently with his advance-guard. He had thus outmanœuvred Burrows and was marching across his front when the two forces met. Ayub now held the shortest route to Kandahar. Burrows therefore decided to attack him and gave the order to advance. The heat was very trying to all ranks and the men had not breakfasted before starting.

The Strength of the Two Forces.—Before describing the action, it is desirable to give some estimate of the army commanded by Ayub. His regular troops consisted of nine regiments aggregating 4000 men; his cavalry was 3000 strong, and his artillery consisted of four field batteries and one mule battery with a total of 30 guns. Six of these guns were rifled Armstrong guns of superior range and weight to any on the British side. But, as was always the case in Afghanistan, the warlike tribesmen, many of whom were *Ghazis*, provided a large number of superb fighting men. The total of Ayub's army was estimated at 25,000. Against this formidable force Burrows was only able to oppose some 2000 men and 12 guns, six of which were smooth-bored 6-pdrs., manned by a partially trained detachment with a totally inadequate supply of ammunition.

The Battle of Maiwand, July 27.—The cavalry gained contact with the enemy shortly after passing the village of Mahmudabad, and was supported by two guns on the right and the left. The main body passed through Mahmudabad (where the baggage was parked), and was deployed in rear of the advance guard, which was already engaged. In front of it at a distance of some six hundred yards was a dry *nullah* 15 to 20 feet deep which was held by *Ghazis* throughout the action; and large masses of the enemy were reported by the cavalry as stretching in a wide semicircle to the front.

The Artillery Duel.—The action commenced with an artillery duel, in which Ayub's guns outmatched the



Painted by Frank Feller

MAIWAND: THE LAST STAND

NOTE.—The battle was actually fought in open country with mountains seven or eight miles distant

British. The Afghan regular infantry was in the centre, but the still more formidable *Ghazis* working down the *nullah* under cover threatened the British right, while swarms of Afghan horsemen threatened the left rear and the baggage. The Indian cavalry was thus obliged to remain under artillery fire to check the Afghan horsemen, who pressed round both flanks.

To quote Lieutenant T. F. T. Fowle: "Their artillery was extremely well served; their guns took ours in flank as well as directly, and their fire was concentrated. We were completely outmatched, and although we continued to fire steadily, our guns seemed quite unable to silence theirs. Their six Armstrong guns threw heavier shell than ours. . . . They continued to advance, overlapping us on both flanks."

The Advance of the Afghans.—Taking advantage of their superior artillery, the Afghans, using the *nullah* referred to above, pushed up their guns to within 500 yards of the British line, while the regular infantry and masses of *Ghazis* planted their standards within 700 yards of the 66th. The smooth-bore guns, whose ammunition was exhausted, owing to the absence of ammunition carriages, were withdrawn, pending the arrival of a fresh supply.

At this period the infantry fired steadily with good effect, but the enemy were in such overwhelming numbers and outflanked the British so completely that the force was practically surrounded. Realizing the desperate position of the British, the *Ghazis* now charged from the *nullah* diagonally across the front of the British right. The attack first struck the two companies of Jacob's Rifles on the left, who had suffered heavily, had lost their only British officer, and were probably discouraged by the loss of artillery support. They broke and fell back to their right on the Bombay Grenadiers, who had also suffered severely, and who also broke. The 66th, who had been protected by a fold in the ground from the Afghan shells, fired steadily on the *Ghazis*, inflicting severe losses, and were still in line when they were struck in rear by the retreating mass of native infantry. Their

impact upset the line of the 66th and the confused mass divided up into two separate bodies. The right section, which included the 66th, who kept in groups, retreated towards Khig, while the left section made for Mahmudabad. Burrows had ordered the cavalry to charge, but they had pulled up and retired.

The 66th at Bay.—The 66th, which had retreated on Khig, held fast until there remained but a group 100 strong. This band fell back to a walled garden to the south of Khig. There a second stand was made under heavy artillery fire. Finally the last eleven survivors charged out of the garden and, standing back to back, fought to the death.

> On fame's eternal camping-ground their silent tents are spread,
> And glory guards with solemn round the bivouac of the dead.[1]

The Account given by Major Lynch.—Before quitting the subject of this battle, I would mention that I have been especially privileged to discuss it with Major Hyacinth Lynch, the last surviving officer of the gallant 66th. I now quote from his vivid description: "The enemy's Cavalry got ready to charge us early in the fight and very formidable they looked, well mounted. We prepared for Cavalry in the usual way and, when they were quite near, McMath gave them a volley; this brought down many horses and riders and in the confusion we commenced individual firing into them. Some of the Cavalry came up to us but their shock action was gone and broken and there was no speed on them. The horses did not like the bayonets. Our men stuck the riders and horses as they brushed against the bayonets and I could see them riding from our left to right pushing the bayonets to one side. They did not charge us again."

Of the last phase of the action he writes: "Crossing the watercourses now dry (the water had been turned off) after being wounded, I arrived at a garden where our men were making a stand behind thick mud walls. While there, the artillery was hammering us, a large portion of a wall in front collapsed and I could see the

[1] This couplet is engraved on the war memorial at Dornoch.

Ghazis advancing with flags and their long knives glistening in the afternoon sun. While lying on the ground and feeling very bad, the last of the 4 Guns E/B R.H.A. passed near me, retiring. Captain Slade saw me, halted the gun and had me placed on the near axletree seat. I remember that the gun was so hot from firing that I could not touch it with my boots."

The Retreat.—The fire of the British horse artillery during the last phase of the battle inflicted heavy losses on the enemy. Two guns were captured, but the other four came into action repeatedly to cover the retreat of the survivors of the disaster.

Fortunately the pursuit was not pressed hard, the Afghans turning their attention to the congenial task of looting the baggage train. To quote from Slade: "All over the wide expanse of the desert are to be seen men in twos and threes retreating. . . . The guns and carriages are crowded with helpless wounded officers and men suffering the tortures of the damned. . . . At last the river is reached; it is 11 A.M. and thirty-two miles from the battlefield."

Here Burrows reorganized his force which sighted a relief column advancing towards the retreating brigade, whose losses were practically one-half of its strength.

Summary.—Studying this action, more than half a century later, it would appear that the responsibility for the disaster lay principally with the Indian authorities. They were aware or should have been aware that Ayub possessed a powerful artillery, but yet permitted Stewart to march north and left the Kandahar force miserably weak in this respect. At Ahmad Khel the situation of Stewart's division was critical for a time, although the Afghans possessed only two guns. With this recent experience, it was surely unwise to match a weak brigade against Ayub's overwhelming numbers and overpowering artillery. Moreover, we learn that Burrows repeatedly asked Primrose for reinforcements, which were refused — unjustifiably so in my opinion. Burrows was practically ordered to attack an overwhelming force, supported by a vastly superior artillery. On the field of battle he made

the most of his force, which had no reserve, and in the retreat his gallantry and determination were noteworthy.

The disaster certainly brought out the heroism displayed by the 66th regiment. It reminds us vividly of Leonidas and his Spartans at Thermopylae, who charged the myriads of Persia and fought to the death:

> Go, stranger, and to Lacedaemon tell
> That here, obeying her behests, we fell.

The Siege of Kandahar.—As a result of the Maiwand disaster, the cantonment situated a mile to the west of the city was hastily evacuated. The garrison, some 3000 strong, now occupied the city which, with its thick walls of rammed clay and its gates covered by bastions, was speedily made impregnable to any attack by Ayub Khan, more especially after the expulsion of the entire Pathan population, some 15,000 in number. Outside buildings that could give cover were gradually demolished, trees were felled, and a wire entanglement was constructed round the walls.

Ayub Khan marches to Kandahar.—On August 5 the vanguard of Ayub's army reached the outskirts of Kandahar and, two days later, the entire force was concentrated in a position near Old Kandahar to the west. An intermittent cannonade, which did little harm, was not followed up by an attack on the city.

A Sortie from Kandahar.—On August 15 an unsuccessful attack on the village of Deh Khoja was made from the Kabul Gate. This useless operation ended in heavy losses, including the death of Brigadier-General Brooke.

The Afghans take up a Position behind the Baba Wali Kotal.—On August 24 the Afghans were seen to have broken up their camp. They had heard of the approach of a powerful British force and of the proclamation of Abdur Rahman as Amir. A reconnaissance proved that they had taken up a position behind the Baba Wali *Kotal* and probably intended to fight the relieving force. Three days later communication with it was established.

The March of Sir Frederick Roberts.—Upon hearing

the news of the Maiwand disaster it was decided to despatch a powerful column from Kabul under the command of Roberts and, on August 8, it started off southwards. The fact that Stewart had recently followed the same route and had inflicted a severe defeat on the Ghilzais lessened the chances of opposition, while the strong support of the Amir, who wrote letters to all the chiefs and sent his officials ahead to collect supplies, was of the greatest value.

The march was uneventful. At Ghazni the Governor presented the keys of the city to Roberts. On August 17 he received a letter from Colonel Tanner, who was commanding at Kalat-i-Ghilzai, dated August 12. In it he reported that the Kandahar garrison on August 8 had two months' rations and fifteen days' forage in hand. Arriving at Kalat-i-Ghilzai, where supplies in abundance had been laid in, the force rested for a day. Roberts decided to add its garrison of 1000 men with 2 guns to his force.

Upon reaching Tirandaz, thirty-one miles from Kalat-i-Ghilzai, on August 26, information was received from Kandahar that Ayub had retired to the Baba Wali *Kotal*, where he was entrenching. On August 28 the column reached Robat, some nineteen miles from Kandahar. There it was decided to halt a day and to make two short marches into Kandahar. The men and animals were fatigued and sore-footed but the health of the force was excellent. St. John and the Assistant Quarter-Master-General met Roberts at Robat. He also received a letter from Major-General R. Phayre, who reported that his force, marching *via* Quetta, could not reach Kandahar before September 8.

The Relief of Kandahar.—On the last day of August Roberts relieved Kandahar. His force had marched 313 miles in twenty-two days. The relieving column was given a subdued welcome. Indeed Roberts commented severely on the loss of *moral* displayed by the greater part of the garrison. He camped to the west of the city with his right on the deserted cantonment and his left touching Old Kandahar.

A Reconnaissance.—On the day of his arrival at Kandahar, Roberts sent out a reconnaissance towards the high ground to the north-west, immediately above the villages of Gundigan and Murghan. There the infantry and guns were halted, while the cavalry, avoiding the numerous walled gardens, penetrated to the village of Pir Paimal situated at the north-west corner of the Baba Wali range. As soon as the fire of the enemy had been drawn, the cavalry retired. But the Afghans immediately advanced in considerable numbers and pressed the retiring force, so much so that the whole of the 3rd Brigade fell in to support it.

The Decision to attack the Afghan Left.—Roberts had satisfied himself that any attempt to carry the rugged Baba Wali *Kotal* by assault would involve heavy losses, and he thereupon decided to threaten that position and to concentrate his real attack on the Afghan left, which occupied the village and walled gardens of Pir Paimal. His force consisted of 3800 British and 11,000 Indian troops with 36 guns. The total of the Afghan force was probably less. The 3rd Infantry Brigade, which was to make the demonstration against the Baba Wali range, formed up on the right behind the low hills which covered the British camp, while the 1st and 2nd Brigades, which were to make the main attack, were stationed on the left. The cavalry under Brigadier-General Hugh Gough, with horse artillery, formed up in rear of the left with instructions to work round by Gundigan so as to threaten the rear of Ayub's force and endanger its retreat towards the Helmand. The Kandahar force constituted a strong reserve.

The Battle of Kandahar.—At 9 A.M. fire was opened with the 45 pdrs. on the *Kotal*, which was held in great strength by *Ghazis*. This feint having been successful in attracting the attention of the enemy, the 92nd Highlanders and the 2nd Gurkhas carried the village of Mulla Sahibdad where the *Ghazis* resisted desperately. The enemy, holding Gundi Mulla and Gundigan, now fell back on the position at Pir Paimal, from which the advancing troops speedily drove them.

To quote Roberts: "During the early part of the advance the Afghans collected in great strength on the low hills beneath the Baba Wali *Kotal*, evidently preparing for a rush on our guns; their leaders could be seen urging them on, and a portion of them came down the hill, but the main body apparently refused to follow, and remained on the crest until the position was turned, when they at once retreated".[1]

The capture of Pir Paimal opened the way to the strongly entrenched main position and here I quote from Major (afterwards Field-Marshal Sir George) White: "The enemy occupied a position in front of their camp; a long ditch afforded a good natural entrenchment; on the enemy's left of this ditch his position was prolonged by a commanding knoll, which enfiladed a ditch running up to the position. . . . Behind the ditch was a small square enclosure in which there were a considerable number of the enemy. Two of their guns were just to the left of it. . . . I worked the men up to a charge which they executed in fine style. About five or six men were killed crossing the open, but I had the satisfaction of seizing the guns and Ayab's last position."[2] On the extreme left, another charge by the 3rd Sikhs broke up a band of Afghans, who had gathered round three guns.

The Flight of the Afghans.—The defeated Afghan army quickly disappeared into the gardens and orchards, leaving to the victors their thirty guns, together with the two guns belonging to the Royal Horse Artillery which had been taken at Maiwand. The amazing rapidity of their retreat and the cover afforded by the walled orchards and villages prevented heavy losses being inflicted on the defeated enemy by the pursuing cavalry. The total casualties of the British force were 35 killed and 213 wounded, while that of the Afghans was estimated at about 1200 killed.

Thus ended the battle of Kandahar which fully avenged Maiwand and relieved Kandahar. In view of

[1] *Op. cit.* vol. ii, pp. 365-368. There is a pen and ink sketch of the battle-field opposite p. 368.

[2] *Life of Field-Marshal Sir George White*, by Sir Mortimer Durand, vol. i, p. 261.

the great strength of the force under the command of Roberts, the fact that the Afghan losses at Maiwand had been severe and that only one-third of the tribesmen were armed with firearms, the victory was, humanly speaking, certain. Ayub Khan must have realized that he could not possibly defeat a force that was four times more powerful than that which he had beaten at Maiwand after suffering heavy losses among his own men, and we may justly pay a tribute to the courage of the Afghans who made such a determined stand against the war-hardened British troops led by Roberts.

The March of Major-General Phayre.—A brief account of the column which marched to the relief of Kandahar *via* Quetta is now called for. The news of the Maiwand disaster threw the whole country from Sibi to Chaman into a state of hostile turmoil. Phayre, who was in command of the Southern Afghan Field Force, organized a strong column and advanced in the face of constant attacks on his lines of communication; he also suffered from transport difficulties. Finally, when about a long march from the beleaguered city, he heard of the victory gained by Roberts and was instructed to station his troops wherever water and supplies were procurable. Although his force was disappointed in their hopes of relieving Kandahar, its appearance on the scene undoubtedly strengthened the British position in Southern Afghanistan.

Summary.—To conclude, that great soldier Roberts had successfully accomplished his double task of avenging Maiwand and of relieving Kandahar. British honour was vindicated and British prestige, that invaluable asset of Empire, was restored, and on that note the Second Afghan War, by which Russian intrigues had been defeated and a strong ruler set on the throne of Afghanistan, was brought to a successful conclusion.

CHAPTER XLI

ABDUR RAHMAN IS ACKNOWLEDGED AMIR OF AFGHANISTAN AND ITS DEPENDENCIES

My Lords, the Key of India is not Herat or Kandahar. The Key of India is London.—DISRAELI.

The Position of Abdur Rahman as Amir of Kabul.—Thanks to his invaluable autobiography, we can learn much as to how the Amir viewed the position of affairs after the departure of the British. He writes: "On my succeeding to the throne, and after the departure of the English from Kabul, I placed my foot in the stirrup of progress and administration. . . . The country exhibiting a rebellious spirit, I appointed private detectives and spies to report to me all that went on among the people, thus finding out with abundant proofs those who were loyal and friendly. . . . The ringleaders and worst offenders were the fanatical *mullas* and headstrong chiefs, who had been partisans of the late Shir Ali's family. . . . These were treated according to their actions, some of them being banished from the country, while others suffered the worst fate of all for their misdeeds." He then pointed out two things: "There was firstly, no money to pay the army or for any other Government expenditure; and secondly, there were no arms, ammunition or military stores". To quote again: "I have said before that when I first succeeded to the throne of Kabul, my life was not a bed of roses. On the contrary, I was surrounded by difficulties of all kinds. Here began my first severe fight, against my own relatives, my own subjects, and my own people. I had hardly settled down in Kabul, and had had no time for military preparations, when I found myself obliged to go to war."

The First Letter of Lord Ripon to the Amir.—On September 10, 1880, Lord Ripon wrote to the Amir to inform him of the victory of Lord Roberts at Kandahar and to congratulate him on the success with which he was consolidating his position at Kabul. This letter was the first to be written by the Viceroy to the Amir. It was reported that the Amir was intensely gratified at receiving it, and had said that "so long as no letter came to him from the Viceroy, it was to be surmised that there was a screen of estrangement isolating him from his Excellency". This recognition of his standing as an important ruler strengthened his position considerably, and he immediately wrote to Tashkent and instructed his family to rejoin him at Kabul.

Negotiations for placing the Province of Kandahar under the Amir.—The mutiny of the *Wali's* troops at Girishk constituted a suitable peg on which to hang the change of policy prescribed by the Gladstone Government in June 1880. The Foreign Secretary, Mr. (later Sir Alfred) Lyall, visited Kandahar and reported that since the *Wali* had not been asked to resume the Government of the country after the defeat of Ayub, it was clear that the situation had to be considered anew. The *Wali* finally accepted the offer of a liberal pension with gratitude and, leaving Afghanistan, settled in India.

The ground having thus been cleared to some extent, negotiations were opened with a view to handing over the province to Abdur Rahman. They were not as easy as might have been expected. Abdur Rahman asked for a personal interview with the Viceroy, which was not granted, much to his disappointment. Again, the envoy whom he sent to India had no authority, except to take over supplies of arms and ammunition, which had been granted to him. As he aptly put it: "On the one hand, I considered the position in which I should be placed by accepting the city, a very serious one. I knew that Ayub was ready to attack the city immediately, without giving me any time for preparation for its defence. . . . On the other hand, the Kingdom of Kabul without Kandahar, was like a head without a nose, or a fort without any

gate." After much correspondence in which he pressed for more money and more munitions, in March 1881, Abdur Rahman practically intimated to the Viceroy his acceptance of the province. Later, he received the additional gift of three batteries of artillery and of a number of rifles, together with a temporary grant of 50,000 rupees *per mensem*.

The Position of Ayub Khan.—After his severe defeat by Roberts, Ayub retired to Herat. In February 1881 two envoys were despatched by him to Kandahar. They represented that the *Sirdar* accepted the deposition of Yakub Khan, and considered himself his lawful successor, but that he would submit to the wishes of the British Government. No answer was given at first to the envoys, but on March 21 St. John informed them of the Amir's acceptance of Kandahar; and the envoys departed, with the advice to recommend Ayub to make terms with him.

Abdur Rahman occupies Kandahar.—In due course more than one hundred letters addressed by the Amir to *Sirdars*, to Government officials and to leading *mullas* and merchants, were received at Kandahar. Troops followed and, on April 21, 1881, at noon, the British flag was hauled down under a salute of thirty-one guns. The transfer of authority to the Government of the Amir was quiet and orderly and, by April 27, all British troops had quitted Afghan soil.

Ayub Khan again attacks Kandahar, July 1881.—The Amir, as he had anticipated, was not allowed to hold Kandahar without a struggle. To quote his autobiography: "He [Ayub] possessed better war materials and arms, and, above all, the ignorant *mullas* had proclaimed *jihad* against me. They alleged that I was friendly to the English, and that my rival was the *Ghazi*."

In the event, the two armies met near Girishk on July 20. Ayub's cavalry fled but about eighty heads and Chiefs of Ayub's army were left on the field, who, making a desperate charge, broke the army of Abdur Rahman, which fled. On August 7, Ayub Khan announced his occupation of the city in a letter to St. John, who recommended that he should be recognized as the *de facto*

ruler of the province. The Government of India, however, wisely awaited further developments.

The Amir defeats Ayub Khan, September 22, 1881.—The Amir acted with vigour and decision. Marching from Kabul at the head of his army, a battle was fought under the walls of Kandahar. To quote: "For two whole hours the fighting was very severe, and it was not known with whom was the victory. . . . My army was beginning to fall back a little on its right and left, but the main force in the centre was working well under the encouragement I gave it by my presence. At this moment, when I had pushed well forward, Ayub's forces began to show signs of weakness, and these four regiments of my own infantry, which had submitted to Ayub at the time of their former defeat at Girishk, changed their mind. It had been the usual custom of the trained soldiers before my reign began that the moment they saw one party stronger than the other, they left the weak and joined the strong. These four regiments therefore, seeing that the victory was turning in my direction, at once fired at that body of Ayub's army, which was fighting hard with my forces."

Ayub Khan was utterly routed and, for the second time, lost his guns and camp equipage at Kandahar. To quote again: "One of the priests who had accused me of infidelity had hidden himself under the Prophet's robe.[1] I ordered that an impure-minded dog such as he should not remain in that sacred sanctuary; he was accordingly pulled out of the building, and I killed him with my own hands." Did not Lyall write—

And they eye me askance, the Mullahs, the bigots who preach and pray,
Who followed my march with curses till I scattered Ayub that day;
They trusted in texts and forgot that the chooser of Kings is the sword;
There are twenty now silent and stark, for I showed them the ways of
the Lord.

The Capture of Herat.—The Amir had realized that Herat was very weakly held in the absence of Ayub, and had ordered one of his adherents, Abdul Kuddus

[1] This *khirka*, or robe, kept in a room, afforded *bast* or sanctuary to any criminal or refugee.



AMIR ABDUR RAHMAN KHAN

Khan, to occupy it. This was effected without much difficulty, the Herat troops submitting when led out to fight his troops. Abdur Rahman thus became undisputed ruler of Afghanistan with the exception of the tiny Uzbeg state of Maimena, which was occupied later on.

The Final Settlement of Ayub Khan in India.—After his defeat, Ayub Khan, accompanied by several influential *Sirdars* and followers, reached Meshed in January 1882. He was granted an allowance by the Shah on condition that he should not live in any of the districts bordering Afghanistan. This did not suit his plans for fomenting troubles in that country, and for some years he continued to behave in an unreasonable manner, which caused both the British and Persian Governments much trouble. At the end of August 1887 he suddenly fled from Tehran, where he had been residing for some time, and made a bold but unsuccessful attempt to reach Herat. He was pursued by Afghan cavalry and, after remaining in close hiding, finally surrendered to the British Consul-General at Meshed. There, after much bargaining as to allowances, the entire party, aggregating 814 officers, soldiers, women, children and servants, were sent across Persia and reached Rawalpindi in the early summer of 1888. At that military centre I recollect seeing Ayub Khan and being struck by his virile hawklike features; also, when I was Consul-General in Khurasan some years later, the older members of the staff had much to say about Ayub Khan and the trouble he gave them.

The Question of Sibi and Peshin.—Before concluding this chapter, it is desirable to refer briefly to the arrangements made for Sibi, which is a continuation of the Kutchi Plain and is detached from the country under Afghan rule. Similarly Peshin is geographically part of Quetta, being cut off from the Kandahar province by the Khojak range.

We owe to the statesmanlike foresight of Sir Robert Sandeman, that great Warden of the Marches, the proposal made in January 1879 that these two districts should be separated from Afghanistan. The Foreign Secretary, at this period, informed Cavagnari that Sibi

and Peshin should be excluded from the Amir's authority, but Yakub Khan strongly opposed this resolve, with the result that, as mentioned in Chapter XXXVIII, it was agreed to treat the two districts as "assigned" districts. The Government of India had urged the Secretary of State to agree that the retention of Sibi and Peshin should be included among the provisions of the Treaty of Gandamak. In 1880, however, the British Government decided against the retention of Peshin, but, in the following year, their relinquishment was ordered to be postponed. Finally, convinced by the strong arguments of the Government of India, in 1887 it was decided to incorporate the two districts within the Indian Empire. Today Sibi and Peshin are recognized as being of importance in the frontier defences of the Indian Empire.

The Results of the Second Afghan War.—The evacuation of Kandahar, followed by the overthrow of Ayub and its occupation by Abdur Rahman, closed a period and affords an opportunity for summarizing the results of the Second Afghan War.

The Khaibar Pass, that great highway from India to Kabul, had been taken over and the tribesmen enlisted as road guards. Unfortunately, however, in the opinion of many frontier officers, we did not retain Dakka and the whole of the Mohmand country. The division of this turbulent tribe between India and Afghanistan has caused many expeditions with their attendant loss of life and property which might have been obviated, had the above arrangement been made. Further south, the British retained the Kurram Valley, which constituted an important alternative route into Afghanistan, while the loyalty of the *Turis*, who were Shias and were thus hated by their fanatical Sunni neighbours, was assured. Of far greater importance was the occupation of Quetta, with the districts of Peshin and Sibi, which constitutes one of the strongest strategical positions in Asia. Communications were rapidly improved and, before very long, not only did the railway reach Quetta by two different routes, but the Khojak range was pierced and the railway extended to New Chaman, thus placing Kandahar, which would

have to be occupied in case of an invasion of India from the north, within a few easy marches over a level plain.

A Tribute to Abdur Rahman.—Studying the question some fifty years after these dramatic events, it strikes me that Abdur Rahman should have been given more time and greater financial assistance to organize and equip his army before being pressed to take over Kandahar, more especially in view of the fact that Ayub had considerable influence and was a doughty warrior. Had Ayub Khan defeated his rival at Kandahar, Afghanistan would, once again, have been thrown into a state of anarchy. That he did not do so, represents the greatness of our debt to grim Abdur Rahman. Thanks to his services, Afghanistan was reunited into a kingdom under a resolute ruler who, if not always friendly to the British, at any rate realized that it would be folly to turn to Russia. The facts of the changed situation were recognized by the order of the Viceroy that Abdur Rahman should thenceforth be styled the " Amir of Afghanistan and its Dependencies ".

CHAPTER XLII

THE PANJDEH CRISIS AND THE RUSSO-AFGHAN BOUNDARY COMMISSION

Whose was the provocation is a matter of the utmost consequence. We only know that the attack was a Russian attack. We know that the Afghans suffered in life, in spirit, and in repute. We know that a blow was struck at the credit and the authority of a sovereign — our protected ally — who had committed no offence. All I say is, we cannot in that state of affairs close this book and say "We will look into it no more". We must do our best to have right done in the matter.—GLADSTONE.

The Anxiety of the Amir about his Northern Frontier.— The relations of the Government of India with Abdur Rahman, whose demands for munitions and money seemed to be insatiable, became difficult from time to time. However, due allowances were made for him, and the appointment of an Afghan Envoy at Calcutta and of a British Agent at Kabul somewhat eased the situation.

The Amir had, to some extent, restored law and order in Afghanistan, but only by stationing his troops at various centres; and he had no force available for the protection of his frontiers. As he wrote to the Viceroy in October 1882: "I think it high time to have the question of my boundaries settled with such a powerful enemy as Russia, through the good offices of the British Government. . . . The troops I have collected serve only like the officials of a police force in their respective cities and are engaged in guarding their own countrymen. . . . Should I augment the army, where is the money to come from to defray its expenses? And if I do not augment it, how will the frontiers be put in order? My affairs are hanging by a fine gossamer thread, which cannot support a heavy weight."

Ripon postponed sending an immediate reply to this letter but, in February 1883, he renewed the assurance

given in July 1880, against unprovoked foreign aggression, to which communication the Amir responded in an effusively grateful manner, stating that he had now obtained the assurances he desired. It is quite likely that he had not kept the letter addressed to him in July 1880!

The Grant of an Annual Subsidy.—In February 1883 the Amir marched to Jalalabad with a large force and asked his envoy to arrange an interview with the British authorities. He wished to negotiate a treaty, thus resuming a project, which he had taken up two years previously and had subsequently dropped. A misunderstanding, caused by his envoy carelessly omitting to forward the reply of the Viceroy to this request, created much sore feeling. However, the grant of twelve lakhs of rupees annually, which was made to Abdur Rahman for the payment of his troops and the defence of his frontier, effectually cured his resentment.

The Views of Lord Ripon.—Ripon realized that if the Amir was unable to maintain peace on his borders before the Russian and Afghan boundaries became conterminous, the position would be critical, and that such a situation might arise at any time. He considered that a treaty with Russia was preferable, and that the grant of a subsidy was only necessitated by the refusal of the British Government to entertain the proposal.

In his letter to Abdur Rahman, in which the offer of the subsidy was made, Ripon wrote sympathetically of the exceptional difficulties with which he was faced on his northern frontier. He also emphasized the declarations previously given of support against unprovoked attack. For reply, Abdur Rahman expressed his entire satisfaction and reaffirmed his loyalty to his pledges. He stated that he no longer desired an interview with the British authorities. He had gained what he wanted for the time being through their far-sighted generosity.

The increasing Anxiety of Abdur Rahman at the Russian Advance.—In spite of the support he was receiving from India, the continual and rapid advance of Russia naturally caused the Amir grave anxiety. He could not despatch well-armed troops to meet a Russian attack, nor had he

any confidence in the loyalty or integrity of his officials in the Herat province which, partly owing to its distance from Kabul, was less under his control and remained discontented. Moreover, during this period, the intrigues of Ayub Khan constituted an additional source of anxiety.

The Views of the Government of India.—Mr (later Sir Mortimer) Durand, who was Indian Foreign Secretary, summed up the situation in January 1884: " The only statesmanlike course is to endeavour to come to a really frank and friendly understanding with the Power which we have hitherto tried in vain in a half-hearted way to thwart and impede. I would, if possible, embody that understanding in a formal treaty, precisely defining the limits of Afghanistan . . . and recognizing the extension of Russian influence up to those limits."

Again, his diary of July 23 runs: " The Russian question has assumed an altogether new phase. We sent home a telegram and then despatches recommending the delimitation of the Afghan frontier, and the idea was well received. But in the meantime the Russians occupied Merv, then pushed up the valley of the Murghab and finally seized Sarakhs in defiance of Persian protest." [1]

Lack of Geographical Knowledge by the British.—At that time the British possessed no definite knowledge as to the exact boundaries of Northern Afghanistan. The Amir did not help matters since he appeared to take little interest in Persian encroachments in Badghis, which were reported to him, while he was sending troops to the trans-Oxus districts of Shignan and Roshan, which, by the Agreement of 1873, lay outside Afghanistan. Thus the British position was unsatisfactory, and of this Russia took the fullest advantage.

Lord Ripon advises the Amir.—In March 1884, the Viceroy explained to the Amir the unwisdom of his action in sending troops across the Oxus into Roshan and Shignan, which contravened the Agreement of 1873. He next referred to the fact that Persian troops had been stationed in the Afghan district of Badghis, at posts some twenty miles east of the Hari Rud in the

[1] Sykes, *Sir Mortimer Durand*, p. 135.

previous summer, but had been withdrawn in the winter. He advised the Amir that the Hari Rud constituted the Perso-Afghan boundary in this section and urged His Highness to occupy the district with troops. It is, of course, clear that the Amir, who knew Afghan Turkistan and Badakhshan intimately, was keen on advances in that area, while his ignorance of the Herat area led to his unfortunate display of apathy as to Persian encroachments in Badghis.

Appointment of British and Russian Commissioners.—In May 1884 it was agreed between the two Powers that Commissioners should be appointed, *rechercher les éléments*, to quote the French text, of a frontier line satisfactory to both Powers. General Sir Peter Lumsden and General Zelenoi were appointed Commissioners, while Colonel (later Sir West) Ridgeway led that portion of the British Commission which was appointed by India, to ensure that its views should receive full weight. The survey party and escort were necessarily supplied by India.[1]

The March of the Indian Section of the Commission.—The march of the Indian section of the Commission, consisting of 1600 men, 1600 camels and some 300 horses across a mainly desert route, hundreds of miles in length, from Quetta *via* Nushki to the Helmand and thence northward to Kushan, was an arduous task. The route had never been explored and the laying out of supplies and water depended partly on the Amir, who had, at first, refused to be responsible for the safety of the mission. However, this was assured, so far as any local trouble was concerned, by the escort of 200 cavalry and a similar force of infantry, and the Indian party joined Lumsden at Kushan in November without having had a single shot fired at them.

Unsatisfactory Delays.—Lumsden, upon reaching the frontier, was informed that the arrangement by which work should start immediately was impossible owing to the alleged ill-health of the Russian Commissioner and

[1] In Sykes, *Sir Mortimer Durand*, ch. x, the whole question of the Commission is fully dealt with.

that the negotiations would have to be postponed until the spring.

The Policy of Russia in Central Asia supported by Germany.—Before dealing with events which led to the Panjdeh crisis, it seems desirable to study how the position in Central Asia was affected by events in Europe. Lord Granville was much exercised by the advance of Russia, and to quote his biographer: "These events in Central Asia coincided with the failure of the expedition to relieve General Gordon, and the interruption of the cordial relations which had existed between Great Britain and Germany. After the death of General Gordon, the Government narrowly escaped defeat on a motion of censure in the House of Commons. The majority fell to twelve." To quote again: "It was certain in Lord Granville's opinion that, as long as the Liberal Government was in power, one question after another in every quarter of the world would be stirred up to the detriment of the country by Prince Bismarck. Although at the time all the facts were not fully known even at the Foreign Office, the situation had been correctly appreciated by Lord Granville as a whole. It hinged on the secret treaty of neutrality which, in 1884, Prince Bismarck had concluded with Russia, without the knowledge and behind the backs of the other parties to the Triple Alliance. Russia interpreted this treaty as giving her a free hand in Asia, and Prince Bismarck gave a tacit approval, as part of the new policy, to a system of persistent annoyance against Great Britain." [1]

The Russian Advance on the Panjdeh Oasis.—To return to Lumsden, the unsatisfactory delay in commencing work was rendered more serious by the receipt of information that General Kamaroff, Governor of the Akhal Oasis, and Colonel Alikhanoff, Governor of Merv, had marched up the Murghab River towards the Panjdeh Oasis where an Afghan General with a force of 100 cavalry, 400 infantry and two guns was established. When about a stage distant from Panjdeh, Komaroff with the main body of the troops marched back to Merv,

[1] Vide *The Life of Lord Granville*, by Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, vol. ii, p. 422.



THE PUL-I-KHISTI



THE ZULFIKAR PASS, LOOKING NORTH-EAST

(From sketches by Sir Edward Durand)

but Alikhanoff sent a messenger to the Afghan leader, with a request for an interview. This request was refused, and Alikhanoff, after despatching a threatening letter, withdrew.

Lumsden visited Panjdeh and reported that Afghan control was complete and that taxes were being levied. Actually the Sarik Turkoman of this oasis had been independent of Afghanistan and there was justification for the Russian claim that they should, like the other sections of the tribe, be included in the Russian Empire. The Afghans had only recently appeared on the scene to stake out claims.

In February 1885 the Russians marched on the Panjdeh Oasis. They drove in the Afghan posts from the north of the oasis and established a post of Sarik Turkoman from Yulatan, at Kizil Tapa, a mound situated about one mile to the north-west of the Pul-i-Khisti or "Brick Bridge" which spanned the Kushk River half a mile above its junction with the Murghab. These Turkoman, as was evidently intended, intrigued with their fellow-tribesmen in the Panjdeh Oasis, and thus threatened the rear of the Afghan force, while it was probably hoped that they would provoke an incident with the Afghan pickets situated on the left bank of the Kushk River in front of the bridge.

The Panjdeh Crisis.—Ridgeway,[1] who was at this time in Panjdeh, protested, but received a reply from Alikhanoff that his instructions were "to occupy the country as far as the Pul-i-Khishti; once established there he would neither advance nor fight". Unfortunately Lumsden had informed Lord Granville that the Russians had a post at the Pul-i-Khisti; whereas it was at Kizil Tapa, barely a mile distant. The mistake was a slight one, but it gave the Russians a pretext of which they took the fullest advantage.

On March 25, Komaroff again appeared on the scene with a strong force of all arms and camped at Kizil Tapa. Yate, on the previous day, had received a copy of Gran-

[1] I have discussed every detail of the Panjdeh question with Sir West Ridgeway and Sir Charles Yate.

ville's cable that the two Governments had agreed that there should be no forward movement on either side from the positions then occupied. The Russians, however, after movements of a provocative nature, issued an ultimatum to the Afghan general, requiring that "every single man of your force shall return to within your former lines on the right bank of the River Kushk". The Afghan General declared that the Pul-i-Khisti was his "Bridge of Heaven", and that he would fight for it to the death.

The Russians defeat the Afghans.—The die was cast, and, early on March 30, the Russians attacked the Afghan force, which had been considerably strengthened, and drove it across the bridge and from the oasis. Their weapons were useless, as the priming was damp from the rain, and their losses were very heavy. There was no pursuit, but the Russians annexed the Panjdeh Oasis by proclamation and, needless to say, the British suffered severely in prestige.

The Visit of the Amir to India.—At that time the Amir was paying a visit to Lord Dufferin at Rawalpindi. The honours that were accorded to him, including a welcome by H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, created a favourable atmosphere, although with true Afghan suspicion he refused to use the telephone that had been installed, stoutly maintaining that he could not distinguish a single word on it. He considered it to be a spying machine!

As to the Panjdeh crisis, Durand wrote: "The Amir took it very coolly. We received the news about dinner-time, and I drove at once to tell him of the slaughter of his people and the wounding and death of his general. He begged me not to be troubled. He said that the loss of two hundred or two thousand men was a mere nothing and, as for the general, that was less than nothing. Afterwards he pretended to take the business as an affront only to be wiped out by the blood of many thousand Russians; but his first feeling was certainly one of indifference."[1]

Lord Dufferin described the Amir as "a prince of

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 146.

frank and even bluff, yet courteous manners; quite at his ease amid a crowd of foreigners; speaking pleasantly of the first railway journey he had ever undertaken; a man of some humour in jokes, with a face occasionally crossed by a look of implacable severity — the look of Louis XI or Henry VIII — that is now never seen in civilized life". Elsewhere he stated: "But for the accidental circumstances of the Amir being in my camp at Rawalpindi, and the fortunate fact of his being a prince of great capacity, experience, and calm judgment, the incident at Panjdeh alone, in the strained condition of the relations which then existed between Russia and ourselves, might of itself have proved the occasion of a long and miserable war."

The Settlement of the Panjdeh Crisis.—The feeling aroused in Great Britain was intense. Gladstone demanded a vote of £11,000,000, a great sum in those days, for war preparations, and it was declared that a Russian advance on Herat would constitute a *casus belli*. Fortunately Granville and de Giers agreed that negotiations should be continued in London and that the Panjdeh Oasis should, in the meanwhile, be neutralized. Thus ended the Panjdeh incident in which a Russian general, anxious to secure for Russia an oasis inhabited by Sarik Turkoman, and unwilling to await the decision of the Commission, took advantage of a quibble to attack the miserably armed but valiant Afghans. He thereby nearly precipitated a war that would have seriously weakened both belligerents and would probably have resulted in the ultimate hegemony of Germany.

Sir Peter Lumsden's Recommendations.—On April 23, Lumsden telegraphed to Granville pointing out that if the Commission were appointed to demarcate the alleged frontier, its position would be most humiliating in the eyes of the Afghans, Sariks and Uzbegs. He added that, for the present Commission, which had been so much affronted, to have any relations with Russian officers would be most undesirable. Accordingly he proposed that the definite limits of Afghanistan should be fixed at home on the reports and surveys which had been made.

These proposals were accepted; Lumsden was recalled, while Ridgeway was left in charge of the Commission.

The Fortification of Herat.—The Amir had been repeatedly pressed to repair the fortifications of Herat, but it was not without difficulty that British officers were admitted to that city, thus amply confirming the Amir's views that they would resent British assistance. Ridgeway, after the completion of some defence works, reported that Herat could not stand a siege for more than a month or so and that, in case of war, he was strongly opposed to the Mission taking refuge in that city.

The Russo-Afghan Boundary Commission.—In September 1885 the definition of the frontier was settled by Lord Salisbury (who, in July 1885, had succeeded Mr. Gladstone as Prime Minister) and the Russian Ambassador. In November, Ridgeway met Colonel Kuhlberg, the Russian Commissioner, at Zulfikar Pass. There they erected the first two pillars which, twenty-five years later, I sighted from the Persian bank of the Hari Rud, glistening white in the rays of the setting sun.

The long delay while awaiting instructions from home had not been wasted by the British surveyors under Major (later Sir Thomas) Holdich, whose triangulation was readily accepted by the Russian Commissioner. From Zulfikar Pass to the Murghab, both parties had already traversed the ground, which was practically known as far as Maruchak. In spite of the Protocol the Russians claimed a large area which would have brought them appreciably nearer to Herat, while the Afghan representative, who served a very harsh master, naturally fought hard for local grazing grounds. Moreover, the Amir was undoubtedly permitting his officials to have direct correspondence with Russian officials. However, in spite of constant reference by the two Commissioners to their respective Governments, the work proceeded steadily, while the personal relations of the two camps remained excellent throughout.

Beyond Maruchak the Mission entered the intricate maze of clay and sandhills known as Chol, which spread out towards Maimana, Andkhui and the Oxus. To quote

Holdich: " A wild, white, silent wilderness of untrodden snow; a thin, blue line of jagged hills in the far distance; a deep, intensely deep, canopy of blue sky above, and the glare of the sunlight off the snowfields. Such was the daily record." [1]

The Question of Khamiab and Khwaja Salar.—A serious dispute arose about Khamiab on the Oxus. It was mainly due to the acceptance in the Boundary Agreement between the two Governments of Khwaja Salar as a ferry on the Oxus which was to constitute the termination of the boundary. The ferry undoubtedly existed when Burnes mentioned it some fifty years before the Agreement was drawn up, but it had disappeared and been forgotten. Ridgeway identified it with Islam, situated some fourteen miles above Khamiab, a district inhabited by an Afghan population that had paid revenue to Afghanistan for a generation. Having examined the question locally he returned to England, instructions having been received to sign the maps and Protocol as far as Dukchi, a distance of 330 miles to the east of Zulfikar Pass, and to leave the dispute in question to be settled between the two Governments.

Ridgeway's Successful Settlement with Russia.—After reporting in London, Ridgeway was sent to St. Petersburg as British Commissioner, to negotiate terms. He found the military party adverse to a settlement, which put a definite limit to their forward policy. Fortunately, however, he was received by the Tsar, and to quote his letter to Durand: " I was positively shocked when I came home the first time from St. Petersburg to find that Lord Salisbury and his Cabinet wished to let the whole thing slide. . . . It was only when I assured the Cabinet, staking everything on it, that the Emperor intended to come to a settlement, that they agreed to let the negotiations go on. Lord Salisbury's last words to me were: ' The demarcation is not worth the paper it is written on, but as you have begun, you had better finish it, if you can '." [2]

In spite of these pessimistic words, Ridgeway induced the Russians to accept compensation for Khamiab

[1] *The Indian Borderland*, p. 153.

[2] Sykes, *Life of Durand*, p. 148.

on the Oxus, in the neighbourhood of Kushk. Finally, he was able to report that "The Amir has not lost a penny of revenue, a single subject, or an acre of land which was occupied or cultivated by any Afghan subject". He certainly merited the gratitude of Great Britain, of India, and of the Amir.

The Signature of the Final Protocols in July and August 1887.—The final Protocols dealing with the Russo-Afghan boundary from the Hari Rud to the Oxus were signed in 1887. This Agreement was strengthened by the frank declaration of the British Government that a movement on Herat would constitute a *casus belli*. De Giers stated that it was clear that Afghanistan lay within the sphere of British influence and observed with much emphasis, "*C'est la parole de l'Empereur que vous avez, non seulement la mienne*".

Contrary to general expectation at the period, this frontier, laid down some fifty years ago, has been respected, and its settlement on fair and honourable lines, in spite of the crisis which it occasioned, undoubtedly improved relations between the British and Russian Empires, while the Amir probably realized that his interests had been safeguarded, albeit he was most chary in making acknowledgements of services rendered to him. It remains to add that the Tsar and his advisers considered the line of least resistance lay towards China with the result that, in 1892, the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway was commenced.

CHAPTER XLIII

THE DURAND MISSION TO KABUL

Frontiers are the chief anxiety of nearly every Foreign Office in the civilized world, and are the subject of four out of five political treaties or contentions that are now concluded. . . . Frontier policy is of the first practical importance, and has a more profound effect upon the peace or warfare of nations than any other factor, political or economic.—LORD CURZON.

British Relations with the Amir under Lord Lansdowne.—The behaviour of the Amir was unsatisfactory from many points of view when Lord Lansdowne assumed office in December 1888. He had agreed to receive a British Mission and, in September, Sir Mortimer Durand was nominated to proceed to Kabul in charge of it. But His Highness, who had been seriously ill during the summer, was fully occupied with the rebellion of Ishak Khan and, after considerable procrastination, replied: " It is a thing which must take place, but at the proper time ".

Lord Lansdowne's Rebuke to the Amir.—Somewhat unfortunately, the new Viceroy rebuked the Amir for the cruel manner in which he had punished the rebels in Afghan Turkistan. Abdur Rahman considered this to be interference with his internal administration. He bitterly resented it and never forgave it.

The Amir attempts to open up direct correspondence with London.—Probably, owing to his dislike of the Viceroy's action, in 1892, Abdur Rahman attempted to open up direct communication with Her Majesty's Government, but without success. He also announced his intention of visiting England, but was informed that he must first visit the Viceroy. The Amir was naturally deeply mortified at the failure of these two cherished projects.

Summary of the Relations with the Amir in 1892.—It

seems desirable at this point to summarize the attitude of the Amir in the most important questions which concerned him and the British Government. First of these was the fact that he treated the British Agent at Kabul almost as a prisoner and did not even permit his brothers to visit him. In fact, he was cut off from all intercourse.[1] Even after the Amir's visit to India, there was no change in this attitude, the Agent being miserably lodged and practically forbidden to ride or walk on the public roads.

With regard to other matters, the Amir permitted the cemeteries at Kabul and Kandahar to be desecrated. Moreover, the proclamations he issued to his subjects displayed hostility alike to Russia and to Great Britain. Again, by inordinately heavy taxation and by numerous monopolies, he had ruined the trade of the country both with India and with Russia, while he had killed or banished practically every man of rank or influence in the country, and was especially hostile to anyone who had assisted the British in any manner. Moreover, the Amir had persisted in holding territory to the north of the Oxus in defiance of the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1873, while his foolish proclamations of hostility to Russia exposed himself and the British to the risk of serious complications.

The Claims of Abdur Rahman on Jandol and Chitral.— To turn to the North-West Frontier: it had always been the view of the Government of India that Chitral, Bajaur and Swat formed no part of the dominion of Afghanistan. This view had been firmly stated in 1861 when Dost Muhammad advanced claims to Bajaur; and in 1877 Shir Ali was warned that any interference with Bajaur, Swat, Dir and Chitral would constitute a contravention of the treaty engagement.

Abdur Rahman, however, having been permitted to incorporate Kunar into his kingdom, occupied Asmar, a little district further up the Kunar Valley. In spite of remonstrances, he refused to give up Asmar and threatened to chastise Umra Khan of Jandol if he troubled the

[1] As late as 1908, when I was Consul-General in Khurasan, the British Agent at Herat was spied upon and was unable to leave his house, except to pay an occasional visit to the Governor.

district. Since the Amir placed his boundary at a point some twenty-five miles above Asmar, he would, if this claim were admitted, be within some thirty or forty miles of the capital of Chitral, while the independence of Chitral, Jandol and other districts of Bajaur would be seriously threatened. Apart from military pressure, by use of money, the dissensions of the various *Khans* would gradually, but inevitably, bring about the loss of the independence of Chitral and Bajaur; so short-sighted were their Chiefs.

The Intrigues of the Amir with the Afridis.—Continuing our survey southwards, the aggressive action of Abdur Rahman in his relations with the Afridis was particularly marked. Although, in 1883, he had written: "The Afridi country lies in British territory", his efforts to win over the *mullas* and influential men were unceasing. In view of the fact that Afridi levies guarded the Khaibar Pass and enlisted in large numbers in the Indian army, this attitude, and his open claim to be their King, constituted a serious position.

The Question of the Kurram Valley.—In 1880, when Kurram was evacuated by the British troops, the Turis, who belong to the Shia sect, and had rendered the British valuable service, were promised their independence, subject to their good behaviour. As was to be expected, the Amir, who fully realized the strategical importance of the valley, tried to make the position of the Turis unbearable, by raids followed by occupation of the northern part of their territory by a notorious freebooter, termed Chikkai. As a result the British were obliged to send troops into the valley to restore order.

The Importance of the Wazir Country.—Continuing the survey, the Wazir country, which faces the Kabul-Kandahar route, is traversed by two very important passes, the Tochi and the Gumal, which are used by thousands of Afghan tribesmen in their annual migrations to and from the plains of India. The Gumal route was held by levy posts of Mahsud Wazirs, but the Amir had stationed at Wana, situated at the western extremity of the Gumal, some officials who tried to induce the headmen

to ask for his protection. Here again a British force had perforce been sent into the Gumal Pass to maintain order and to reassure the Mahsud headmen.

The Question of Chagai.—Abdur Rahman, as we have seen, spent some days in the district of Chagai after his flight from Afghanistan. It is situated 150 miles to the south of the Helmand, from which it is separated by a wide stretch of desert, termed the Lut, and was always considered to belong to the desert state of Kharan which state rendered allegiance to the Khan of Kalat. The Amir had occupied Chagai, in May 1886, and refused to vacate it.

The Grievances of the Amir.—It is only fair to state that, during this period, the British were steadily advancing, opening up the passes of the North-West Frontier and guarding them with local levies. But, chief among these grievances, was the fact that the Khojak range had been tunnelled and a railway station and fort built at New Chaman, which pointed at Kandahar. The Amir somewhat crudely termed this advance as "running an awl into his navel", while a shrewd British navvy was heard to remark: "Well, I don't think that 'ere 'ole was made thro' the 'ill to peep thro'." Moreover, at this period, there was a scheme in existence for the construction of a railway from Quetta to Seistan, which might have passed through Chagai.

The Amir's *riposte* to the railway extension, which had much upset his subjects, was to order his merchants, under pain of death, to ignore the railway station at Chaman and take their camel caravans to the first station beyond the range; while the marked increase of *Ghazi* outrages in Baluchistan at that period was probably instigated from Kabul.

The Proposal to send Lord Roberts to Kabul.—In July 1892, Lansdowne proposed to the Amir to send Lord Roberts on a Mission with a powerful escort of all arms. The reaction of the Amir to this proposal runs: "I considered the position very critical, to receive 10,000 soldiers, whom I was expected to receive as my guests. I had therefore to prepare 100,000 to receive them." It

was indeed hardly likely that the Amir would care to receive the victor of the Paiwar Kotal and of Kandahar at the head of an army. Accordingly, while expressing his pleasure at the proposal, he said that he could not fix a date until the Hazara rebellion had been crushed. He also employed an attack of gout and all the arts of Oriental diplomacy to procrastinate, being aware that Roberts would soon leave India, upon completion of his period of command.

Mr. (later Sir Salter) Pyne visits Simla.—The situation remained as unsatisfactory as possible, and the British having detained a large consignment of munitions, ordered from Europe by the Amir, he decided to send Pyne, his trustworthy English engineer, to Simla. There Pyne[1] stated frankly that the Amir considered Durand to be his personal enemy and that the Viceroy had, owing to his Foreign Secretary's hostility, become unsympathetic. He also pointed out the rapid occupation by the British of various districts bordering on Afghanistan, whose inhabitants had formerly looked to Kabul.

Pyne was given full opportunities of making himself acquainted with recent events on the Afghan frontier, and in particular with the intrigues of various Afghan officials with frontier tribes, which had created trouble between the Amir and the Government of India.

The Durand Mission, 1893.—Pyne's Mission was most successful. He explained to the Amir that the Government of India was reasonable in its attitude and that he was entirely mistaken as to Durand, who was his friend and well-wisher. This led to the proposal by Lansdowne that Durand should be sent on a Mission to Kabul, which proposal was cordially accepted by Abdur Rahman.

The Mission, which assembled at Landi *Kotal*, was met on the frontier by Ghulam Haidar Khan, the Commander-in-Chief and an escort of cavalry. Treated with lavish hospitality, upon reaching Kabul, it was given a

[1] Pyne, a clerk in a Bombay firm, was sent to Kabul with a consignment of goods. There he attracted the attention of the Amir, who gave him the contract for the erection of an arsenal and, when it was completed, placed him in charge of it.

splendid reception, " a salute of twenty-one guns being fired, bands playing ' God save the Queen ' and fanfares of trumpets being sounded at every corner ".[1]

The Reception of the Mission.—Durand writes of the Amir: " He really seemed very well, much better than in 1885, though thinner. But the great change is in his manner. I looked in vain for my old acquaintance of 1885, with his burly figure and Henry the Eighth face and ready scowl. I suppose the scowl is ready still when wanted, but the Amir of today is a quiet gentlemanly man."

The Opening of Negotiations with the Amir.—After this visit of ceremony, Durand started negotiations in a garden-house where the Amir took good care to place the envoy facing the light, while he was equally careful to turn his own back to it. He also arranged for every spoken word to be written down by a secretary who was concealed. Durand found that his best plan was to forgo reasoned arguments and to bring the Amir by indirect means to the point, while avoiding anything that would irritate a despot. He realized that from time immemorial the Afghans, inhabiting a poor mountainous country, had lived by conquering or by raiding neighbouring countries, as indeed their history proves. No Amir had maintained his army entirely at the expense of his subjects and it was clear that once the boundaries were fixed, only the miserably poor mountains of Kafiristan were left to be annexed.

Durand negotiates the Question of Roshan and Shignan.—The most important question, a question in which Russia was concerned, was the surrender by the Amir of his claims in the trans-Oxus districts of Roshan and Shignan. Durand pointed out to him that the Russian Government pressed for the literal fulfilment of the Agreement of 1873 and that the British Government considered itself bound to abide by the terms of that Agreement. He finally gained the Amir's consent, being helped by a provocative journey of a Captain Vannovsky, in the area under discussion, which was effectually stopped by the Afghan officials breaking down

[1] Sykes, *Life of Durand*, p. 209.

a wooden gallery built into the cliff. Durand emphasized the risk of the recurrence of such events and finally, the Amir said: "My people will not care, or know, whether I go backwards or forwards in Roshan or Shignan, but they care very much to know exactly how they stand on your side".[1] Finally, Durand succeeded in inducing the Amir to agree to the evacuation of Roshan and Shignan in return for the districts not in his possession on the south side of the Oxus in this section.

The Amir's Attitude as regards Wakhan.—The Amir for a long time refused to hold Wakhan. To quote Durand: "He says he had a hand cut off at Somatash the other day, and he is not going to stretch out a long arm along the Hindu Kush to have that shorn off also".[2]

Negotiations about the North-West Frontier.—After many interviews, during which the Amir fought hard for his point of view, Durand was successful in persuading him to accept the following conditions. In return for retaining Asmar and the valley above it as far as Chanak, the Amir agreed not to interfere in any way with Swat, Bajaur, or Chitral. The British Government ceded the Birmal tract of the Wazir country to His Highness, who, on his part, relinquished his claim to the rest of the Wazir country and to Dawar. He also renounced his claim to Chagai.

With reference to the Chaman question, the Amir withdrew his objection to the British cantonment at New Chaman and conceded to the British Government the necessary water-rights, which he had himself purchased. Finally, to mark their sense of the friendly spirit of His Highness, the Government of India, realizing that his revenue was too small for the upkeep of an army and other expenses, undertook to increase his subsidy from 12 to 18 lakhs of rupees a year.

It remains to add that by the Durand settlement all the tribes inhabiting territories east of the line were recognized as belonging to the British "sphere of

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 212.

[2] *Op. cit.* p. 213. For Somatash *vide* ch. xliv.

influence ". This, in effect, constituted tribal territory as British territory and the tribesmen as British subjects. At one time the area between the administered territory and the Durand Line was sometimes erroneously termed " Independent Territory ", a dangerous expression to employ since our aim, both in the interests of the tribesmen and in our own, should be to establish some form of British control by the construction of roads and by other civilizing agencies.

The Mohmand Question.—It is only right to state that the question of the Indo-Afghan boundary in the Mohmand country was not satisfactorily settled. The Durand Agreement ran that this shall follow the line shown in the map attached to the Agreement. The Amir said: " I understand that this line gives me the Mohmands ". Durand replied that the map was a small one and that when the large map was prepared, the matter would be clearer. Actually the Mohmand country had not been surveyed and the line that was drawn cut across the main subdivisions of the tribe. This situation was remedied in a modification subsequently offered to the Amir.

The Great Durbar at Kabul.—After the signature of the documents[1] the Amir held a durbar, which was attended by four hundred leading *Sirdars*. To quote Durand: " He made a really first-class speech beginning, ' Confidence begets confidence. Trusting his safety and that of his Mission to my care, I have protected him.' He then urged his people to be true friends to us and to make their children the same. He said that we did them nothing but good, and had no designs on their country. After each period of his speech, there were shouts of ' Approved! Approved '. On this occasion he was a great orator."

The Important Results of the Durand Mission.—Durand, more than once, told me that the Amir was the strongest man with whom he had to deal. Thus two strong men met, and the Amir, after many conversations and due cogitation, finally decided that Durand was truthful and

[1] They form Appendix C.

that the British were his sincere well-wishers. The importance of this decision was far-reaching and it was without doubt mainly due to it that his successor Habibulla remained loyal to the British during the last Great War.

Durand thus secured for the Indian Empire its most important achievement of external policy during the nineteenth century. He not only materially helped to end the long advance of Russia towards India, but removed a constant source of misunderstanding with that Empire. He thereby undoubtedly paved the way for the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907, which materially facilitated the co-operation of the two Powers in the last Great War. From another point of view Durand, the great boundary-maker, was the great peace-maker and, although his valuable services were most inadequately rewarded, the fact that the boundary of the North-West Frontier of India is known as the "Durand Line", constitutes an honourable memorial to this great Englishman.

CHAPTER XLIV

THE PAMIR AND OTHER BOUNDARY COMMISSIONS

The plain is called Pamier, and you ride across it for twelve days together, finding nothing but a desert without habitations or other green thing, so that travellers are obliged to carry with them whatever they have need of. The region is so lofty and cold that you do not even see any birds flying. And I must notice also that because of this great cold, fire does not burn so brightly, nor give out so much heat as usual, nor does it cook food so effectually.—Marco Polo.

The poet, wandering on, through Arabie,
And Persia, and the wild Carmanian waste,
And o'er the aërial mountains which pour down
Indus and Oxus from their icy caves,
In joy and exultation held his way.

Shelley, *Alastor.*

In Chapter XLII I have dealt with the delimitation of the northern frontier of Afghanistan from Zulfikar Pass to the Oxus. In this chapter I describe, firstly, the labours of the Pamir Commission which completed the delimitation of the northern frontiers of the Amir in 1895. This international Commission was of premier importance. Secondly, I shall deal with the boundary Commission under Mr. (later Sir Richard) Udny, which was charged with delimiting the Afghan boundary from the Hindu Kush to the recognized frontier at Landi Kotal, to be followed by other missions to the Kurram Valley and to Waziristan.

Anglo-Russian Rivalry on the Pamirs.—The question of the settlement of the Afghan frontier to the east of Khamiab created considerable friction between Great Britain and Russia. Our geographical knowledge was scanty, largely because the Amir had refused to permit Ridgeway or any other British officer to examine the area. The country was by nature difficult of access to the British, but relatively easy for Russian parties, as I found when I approached the Pamirs from Kashgar. It must

also be recollected that Great Britain, as representing Afghanistan, and Russia were not the only Powers concerned, since China, who held the Sarikol Valley to the east with a garrison at Tashkurgan, also laid shadowy claims to portions of the Pamirs. Finally it was most desirable in the interests alike of Afghanistan and of the Indian Empire not to leave any gap between the possessions of China and those of Afghanistan.

Colonel Yonoff arrests Captain Younghusband and Lieutenant Davidson.—In the summer of 1891 Colonel Yonoff with a squadron of Cossacks was despatched from Osh to the Pamirs, nominally "to shoot the *Ovis Poli* and to practise rifle-shooting!" In reality, Yonoff's mission was to expel any Chinese or Afghan detachments from the area and anticipate, by these forcible means, the proposed diplomatic settlement with Great Britain. In this connexion the Alichur Pamir had been the somewhat disputed boundary between the Afghans and Chinese long before the appearance of Russia on the scene. Indeed there was a stone, inscribed with a trilingual record in the Chinese, Manchu and Turki languages, on the shore of Yeshil Kul or the "Green Lake", which commemorated a victory of a Chinese general over Kalmuck Chiefs in 1759. The place was thenceforward named Somatash or "the Inscribed Stone".

Yonoff crossed the Pamirs and at Bozai Gumbaz, situated in the Wakhan Valley, which by the Agreement of 1873 had been acknowledged Afghan territory, he met Captain (later Sir Francis) Younghusband, whom he illegally arrested. At the same period Lieutenant Davidson, who was travelling in the Pamirs, was also arrested at Somatash by Yonoff, who expelled a then Chinese official with a detachment of troops from this centre. In the spring of 1892 the Chinese reappeared at Somatash, but were driven out by a small Afghan force. Yonoff, however, returned to the Pamirs with his Cossacks somewhat later, and ordered the Afghans to retire. Although hopelessly outnumbered, they stood their ground bravely and were massacred. The Amir, with good reason, complained bitterly to Durand of this

unwarrantable action of the Russians and threatened to withdraw entirely from Wakhan.

British Negotiations with Russia, 1893, 1894.—At long last apologies were made for Yonoff's unjustifiable actions, but it was clear that Russia was pursuing dilatory tactics in her negotiations while strengthening her position on the Pamirs. In August 1893 the Russian Government proposed to draw a line from the eastern point of Lake Victoria so as to leave Bozai Gumbaz to Russia, and to continue it along the slopes of the Muztagh to the north of the valley of the Wakhijir. Upon being consulted as to this proposal, the Government of India pointed out that such a diversion could not be of the slightest value to the Northern Power except for the purpose of threatening the passes of the Hindu Kush.

Later in the year more reasonable proposals were made but, in 1894, Russia suggested a line by which she would gain control of the routes running to Hunza, Wakhan and Sarikol. In this year Russian troops occupied Shignan, from which district the Amir prudently withdrew his troops.

The Final Settlement of the Pamir Question, in March 1895.—The final settlement laid down that the spheres of influence of the two Powers should be divided by a line which, starting from a point on Lake Victoria near its eastern extremity, should follow the crests of the mountain range running somewhat to the south of the latitude of the lake as far as the Benderski and Orta Bel Passes. It was agreed that a joint Commission should settle the precise line and should also be charged to report any facts bearing on the situation of the Chinese frontier with a view to enabling the two Governments to come to an agreement with the Chinese Government.

The execution of the Agreement was contingent upon the evacuation by the Amir of Afghanistan of all the territories occupied by him on the right bank of the Panja, and by the Amir of Bukhara of the portion of Darwaz, which lay to the south of the Oxus.

The Arrangement made with the Amir.—As mentioned in the previous chapter, Durand had persuaded the Amir

to accept the above Agreement. It was obviously most important for him to retain the administration of the valley of Wakhan, which, as Durand shows, he was unwilling to do. Realizing that the British Government were anxious for him to hold this buffer district, he, first of all, bargained for the cost of a force of 400 sowars and 1000 levies, but finally accepted a special annual subsidy of 50,000 rupees.

The March of the British Commission to Lake Victoria.—Holdich, that truly great surveyor of boundaries, gives an interesting account of the very difficult country which represents the boundary of the Indian Empire at its north-east corner. From Gilgit, through the Yasin Valley to Darkot, there was only a narrow track. The Darkot Pass he describes as " a dangerous and wearisome climbing way, over broken moraine and fissured glacier till one arrives at the snowfields of the pass some 15,000 feet above sea-level, ere plunging or sliding down again to the Yarkhun river ".

To continue: " The advantages we gained on the Darkot lasted us across the Yarkun River and the main chain of the Hindu Kush (which, as all the world knows, is not a difficult range to cross at this point) into the Wakhan Valley, and there for a space we were completely nonplussed. Up the valley of the Wakhan we worried and twisted our way, day after day, along the devil's pathway which flanks the river gorges. There were no flat spaces and no reasonable footpaths along that route. If we were not engaged in a rocky scramble upstairs, we were zigzagging down into depths measuring thousands of feet merely to make a fresh start in another climb after stumbling through a river at the bottom."[1]

The Meeting of the Anglo-Russian Commission at Lake Victoria, July 1895.—On this Commission Great Britain was represented by Major-General Gerard, who had served as Military Attaché at St. Petersburg, with Holdich as his Chief Survey Officer. The Chief Russian representative was General Pavolo Schveikovski, Governor of Ferghana, with M. Benderski as his Chief Survey

[1] *The Indian Borderland*, pp. 289, 290.

Officer, who had served on the earlier boundary Commission. Two Afghan representatives attended, but were unprovided with any credentials, which the Amir stubbornly refused to supply.

The Commencement of the Demarcation.—On July 28, 1895, the first pillar was erected at the eastern end of the lake and, before the middle of August, the boundary line had been demarcated to the Orta Bel Pass.

It was decided by the Commissioners that Lake Sarikol [1] should henceforth be termed Lake Victoria, that the range to the south should be called the Emperor Nicolas II range, and that the peak nearest the range should be known as *Le Pic de la Concorde.*

Changes made in the Actual Demarcation.—Difficulties arose beyond the Orta Bel Pass, since its position, as also that given to the Beyik Pass on the map were about 6′ south of their true positions. In these circumstances, Gerard recommended the acceptance of a line proposed by the Russians running southwards to the watershed of the Taghdumbash, which the Russians acknowledged to be the Chinese frontier. It remains to add that the river flowing westwards from Lake Victoria was officially accepted as a part of the northern boundary of Afghanistan, which was continued thence to Khamiab along the River Oxus.

The Boundary of the Chinese Empire.—No Chinese representatives had appeared on the scene, and when the Russo-Afghan boundary had been thus settled, Holdich crossed the Beyik Pass and rode down towards the great Taghdumbash Valley and the Chinese station at Tashkurgan. He passed a Chinese post, which signified permanent occupation, and had intended to travel to Tashkurgan, but the Chinese authorities, who had evidently watched the proceedings of the Commission from afar, would not permit this.

The Acceptance by the Russian Government of the Demarcation Line.—In March 1896 the Russian Government accepted the line as agreed upon by Generals

[1] Sar-i-Kul actually signifies "head of the lake", and was erroneously applied by Captain Wood to the lake itself.

Gerard and Pavolo Schveikovski. In October the Amir duly took over the Cis-Oxus Darwaz and, at the same period, the Russians made over the evacuated districts of Trans-Oxus Roshan and Shignan to the Amir of Bukhara.

To quote Holdich, from the last pillar " the boundary projected into a place where no pillars or mark-stones could be raised to witness it, amidst the voiceless waste of a vast white wilderness 20,000 feet above the sea, absolutely inaccessible to man and within the ken of no living creature but the Pamir eagles — there the great empires actually meet. It is a fitting tri-junction. No god of Hindu mythology ever occupied a more stupendous throne." [1]

The political results of this Commission were favourable to Russia, since she had been permitted to annex the Pamirs (with the exception of the Taghdumbash Pamir, which was left to China) and had advanced her boundaries towards Afghanistan. From the British point of view, however, the delimitation of a definite boundary was of great importance, a boundary which, moreover, did not touch the Indian Empire at any point, thanks to the Amir's acceptance of the narrow district of Wakhan.

The Udny Commission, 1894–1895.—The Commission which was appointed to delimit the Afghan boundary from the Hindu Kush to Landi Kotal was led by Mr. (later Sir Richard) Udny as Chief Commissioner, with Holdich as Chief Surveyor. It was met on the frontier at Landi Khana by an Afghan escort and, proceeding along the well-worn Kabul route, was joined by Ghulam Haidar, the Amir's Commander-in-Chief and Chief Commissioner. The Kabul River was crossed and the almost unexplored Kunar Valley was entered.

The Route followed by Alexander the Great.—The Mission was treading on historical ground, since the ancient highway from Central Asia to India ran through the Laghman Valley to Bajaur. It was followed by Alexander the Great, who, from Bajaur, crossed the Swat

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 293.

Valley and by a superb feat of arms captured Aornos, situated in a great bend of the Indus.[1]

The Political Situation in the Kunar Valley.—To resume: the Amir had constructed a road up the right bank of the river to Asmar, which district marked the limits of Afghanistan. Some sixty miles farther up the river was Chitral.

Ghulam Haidar, under plea of the danger from hostile tribesmen of Jandol, would not consent to a complete survey of the country being executed. However, by dint of tact and perseverance, some of the hills were climbed with good results and the necessary data were secured.

The Siege of Chitral.—Early in January 1895 news was received of the murder of the *Mehtar* of Chitral. This caused an upheaval in that turbulent state, and led to Dr. (later Sir George) Robertson, the political agent at Gilgit, marching to Chitral with an escort. The situation was rendered difficult by the inopportune release from captivity at Kabul of Shir Afzul, a popular member of the ruling family, who, in alliance with Umra Khan of Jandol, besieged the British force, which suffered heavy losses in a sortie. The British, however, held the fort for some six weeks in spite of attempts at mining and at setting fire to it. They were relieved by Colonel Kelly's remarkable march from Gilgit at the head of a small column.[2]

The Commission and Umra Khan.—Needless to say the Commission camping on the frontier of Bajaur, and incidentally sheltering an escaped Chitrali Chieftain and his followers, took a deep interest in the struggle, and Holdich formed the opinion that members of the Afghan force stationed at Asmar had undoubtedly joined Umra Khan's army. There is little doubt that the Amir's Commander-in-Chief was fishing in the troubled waters and aiding and abetting the besiegers. Probably he hoped to add the state of Chitral to Afghanistan. But the brilliant

[1] Vide *On Alexander's Track to the Indus*, by Sir Aurel Stein.

[2] *Chitral*, by Sir George Robertson, gives a most interesting account of the general political situation and of the siege.

relief of Chitral by Kelly, followed by the march of a British division under Sir Robert Low, who defeated the valiant Pathans at the Malakand Pass, occupied the Jandol Valley without resistance being offered, and crossed the Lowari Pass into the Chitral Valley, ended the power of Umra Khan and definitely settled the fate of these petty states.

The Claims of the Amir.—So far as the Hindu Kush range was concerned there was no need to demarcate it. From the neighbourhood of the Dora Pass, which leads from Afghan Turkistan to the upper tributaries of the Kunar River, the boundary turns southward and follows the crest of a gigantic range termed Shawal, which constitutes the western limit of the Chitral Valley.

By the Udny Agreement of 1893 the Bashgol or Arnawai Valley, which formed part of Kafiristan, was laid down as belonging to the Chitral State. The Amir, however, claimed the whole of Kafiristan as Afghan territory and declared that the Arnawai of the Agreement was a stream which joined the Chitral River (as the Kunar River was known in this section) from the east.

He wished not only to convert the pagan Kafirs to Islam,[1] but to establish a trade-route between Jalalabad and Badakhshan. From the strategical point of view, it would have been unwise for the state of Chitral to have held this outlying valley — our responsibilities were sufficiently great as it was, for Kafiristan is separated from Chitral by the snow-capped Shawal range, which is impassable for many months in the year. Consequently, the decision was given in the Amir's favour.

The Expedition into Kafiristan.—In order to fix the positions of the numerous mountains which are situated between the Hindu Kush and Jalalabad, it was necessary to make an expedition into Kafiristan. By way of precaution Ghulam Haidar first secured a number of Kafir hostages and the explorers were guarded by a strong Afghan escort. To quote Holdich: "Our first day's march was hot and steamy, and we crawled but slowly

[1] For the Amir's conquest of Kafiristan *vide* Chapter XLV.

over the slippery limestone crags, and the crumbling schistose rocks that border the close little valley of the Darin. Up and down those ragged spurs, and through the undergrowth of thickets which were but a tangle of reeds and briars shadowed by wild fig-trees, olives, pomegranates, vines, apricots and oaks, we pushed our slow way for the livelong day, till evening brought us to the foot of the rocks on which was perched the village of Darin." Continuing the march, on the fourth day, "after a straight up and down climb of 5000 feet we reached the Bozasar peak, and this is what we saw. The whole world ringed with snow, line upon line, ridge upon ridge of snow-bound mountain-tops encircling the horizon in one vast sea of snow-billows . . . we could recognize the peaks fixed by the Indus triangulation, and could connect them together." [1]

This concluded the proceedings of the Commission, since the question of the boundary in the Mohmand country had been ruled out of court for the time being, and, after rendering these valuable services to exploration, Holdich received orders to join the still more important Pamir Commission.

The Settlement of the Mohmand Boundary, 1896.—It was not until 1896 that this difficult question was settled by assurances given at a public durbar held at Shabkadar in that year. The clans which accepted the political control of the Government of India were afterwards known as the "assured" clans. Sir Louis Dane subsequently constructed a canal which irrigated their waste lands and converted them into rich sugar and cotton tracts, with the result that raiding practically ceased.

The Boundary in the Vicinity of Arandu.—There was also the small matter of the boundary from the Nawe *Kotal* at the western extremity of Banjaur to the limits of Chitral. The boundary was described under the Udny Agreement as a series of watersheds, but it was not demarcated. In 1932 a Commission under Captain W. H. Hay as British Commissioner, *Sirdar* Habibulla

[1] *Op. cit.* pp. 275-279.

Khan Tarzi as Afghan Commissioner, and *Nasir-ul-Mulk* eldest son of the *Mehtar* of Chitral, met at Dokalim. They took the boundary almost due north to a point on the Arandu stream just above where it emerges from the hills, leaving the Dokalim lands in Afghan territory.[1]

The Delimitation of the Kurram Valley, 1894.—The delimitation of the boundary from the slopes of the Safid Kuh southwards through Kurram was not especially difficult. The inhabitants of the higher slopes of the valley were, as previously mentioned, Turis who, as Shia Moslems, were considered to be heretics by their fanatical neighbours and were anxious for British protection. Consequently there was little or no obstruction in this section.

The Boundary of Waziristan, 1894–1895.—One of the most difficult areas to be dealt with was Waziristan. As a preliminary measure it was decided to form a military post at Wana, a barren plain situated north of the Gumal Pass at the south-west corner of Waziristan. Wana absolutely dominated the Ghilzais and commanded the chief route from Ghazni to India. It ranks as a key position.

In 1894 it was decided to occupy the plateau with a brigade. Survey operations were at once commenced and the party marched with the Delimitation escort to Wana. The survey was continued in different directions, but during a sudden attack on the escort camp, Lieutenant Macaulay was killed. Major Wahab, who was in charge of the survey operations, joined the Boundary Commission under Mr. L. W. King at Domandi in late January, and the survey and demarcation of the boundary from that point to Khwaja Khidr, at the head of the Birmal and Shawal Valleys, was carried through under exceptionally difficult conditions. Later the party entered the Tochi Valley and the demarcation southwards was finally completed in the late spring. By these Commissions the Indo-Afghan boundaries were delimited from the Hindu Kush to Domandi in the Gumal Pass.

[1] *Vide* "Demarcation of the Indo-Afghan Boundary in the Vicinity of Arandu", by Major W. R. Hay, *Geog. Journ.*, vol. lxxxii, No. 4, Oct. 1933.

Much credit is due not only to the gallant and enterprising survey officers, but also to the political officers and to the officers and men of the escorts. Apart from the dangers of attack, the tasks involved considerable hardships of every kind, and some loss of life.

CHAPTER XLV

ABDUR RAHMAN TAMES HIS REBELLIOUS SUBJECTS

Where the word of a King is, there is power: and who may say unto him, "What doest thou?"—ECCLESIASTES viii, 4.

I look from a fort half-ruined, on Kabul spreading below,
On the near hills crowned with cannon, and the far hills piled with snow;
Fair are the vales well watered, and the vines on the upland swell,
You might think you were reigning in Heaven — I know I am ruling Hell.

. . . .

And far from the Suleiman heights come the sounds of the stirring tribes,
Afridi, Hazara, and Ghilzaí, they clamour for plunder or bribes;
And Herat is but held by a thread; and the Uzbeg has raised Badakhshan;
And the chief may sleep sound, in his grave, who would rule the unruly Afghan.

LYALL.

Abdur Rahman describes his Subjects.—In his autobiography Abdur Rahman writes: "Every *mulla* and chief of every tribe and village considered himself an independent king. . . . The tyranny and cruelty of these men was unbearable. One of their jokes was to cut off the heads of men and women and put them on red-hot sheets of iron to see them jump about."

In this chapter I propose to deal with the rebellions of the Ghilzais, of Ishak Khan and of the Hazaras, while I shall also touch on the remarkable views held by Abdur Rahman on more than one subject.

The Shinwari Expedition.—But, before dealing with these important rebellions, a brief reference is called for to the typical case of the Shinwaris. For many years this tribe had made the Peshawar-Kabul road unsafe by murdering travellers, by looting caravans and by driving off the flocks of the villagers. In 1883 Abdul Rahman visited Jalalabad and, at a durbar, tried to influence the Chiefs and *mullas* to stop these outrages, but to no purpose. A strong force was launched against the tribe; they were worsted in four engagements, and were

punished with ruthless severity.

Abdur Rahman concludes the account of this campaign by quoting a Pushtu poem:

You may try gently for hundreds of years to make friends,
But it is impossible to make scorpions, snakes, and Shinwaris into friends.

The Ghilzai Rebellion, 1886.—The Ghilzais, as we have seen in Chapter XXII, had captured Isfahan in 1722, and ruled Persia for some years. They were the most powerful tribe in Afghanistan, noted for their bravery, their fanaticism and their lawlessness, as recorded in previous chapters. They had also desired the return of Yakub Khan to the throne and were unfavourable to Abdur Rahman being proclaimed Amir. Abdur Rahman mentions that he had imprisoned some Ghilzai Chiefs, and in *The Amir's Message* Lyall describes the mistrust which he inspired:

The Ghilzaie Chief wrote answer — Our paths are narrow and steep,
The sun burns fierce in the valleys, and the snow-fed streams run deep;
The fords of the Kabul river are watched by the Afreedee;
We harried his folk last springtide, and he keeps good memory.
High stands thy Kabul citadel, where many have room and rest;
The Amirs give welcome entry, but they speed not the parting guest.

Their Religious Leader.—Their religious leader was the notorious Mushk-i-Alam, who had headed the *jihad* against the British a few years previously. Abdur Rahman had not only ordered the tribe to pay taxes, which was considered almost an insult, but he had filled the cup of his iniquity from the ecclesiastical point of view by abolishing the stipends paid to religious luminaries. They, therefore, called on the Ghilzais, who were most ready listeners, to rebel.

The actual outbreak of hostilities was caused by the murder of a *Sirdar* of the Barakzai clan, by the Ghilzai Chief Shir Khan, who carried off the family and property of his victim. About the same time a regiment of Durrani recruits, which was marching without arms, was attacked, camels and treasure being carried off. The Ghilzais at first won a success, while both the members of their tribe and the Hazaras who were serving as soldiers at

Herat, mutinied and broke away to join the rebels. There was much hard fighting, but finally the Ghilzais were crushed and submitted.

The Rebellion of Ishak Khan, 1888.—Ishak Khan, son of Azim Khan, who accompanied Abdur Rahman in his wanderings, has already been mentioned more than once. Abdur Rahman appointed him Governor of Afghan Turkistan during the first year of his reign, and, relying on an oath sworn on the Koran, trusted him implicitly. To quote: "Having not the slightest idea of his disloyalty, I placed the best rifles and arms at his disposal, because he was on the frontier of Russia". Ishak Khan, however, decided to bid for the throne. He won over the *mullas* by posing as a very strict Moslem, while to attract his Turkoman subjects he became a disciple of one of the dervishes of the Nakhshband sect.[1]

The Amir heard that Ishak was amassing funds from the revenue while continually drawing on Kabul for money, and was plotting against him. He instructed him therefore to visit Kabul, but he excused himself on the grounds of ill-health. In June 1888 Abdur Rahman became seriously ill and the rumour spread that he was dead, whereupon Ishak proclaimed himself Amir and coined money in his own name.

The Campaign against Ishak Khan.—The battle with the usurper took place near Tashkurghan. It began early in the morning, and late in the afternoon one column of Abdur Rahman's army was defeated and fled. While the main body was still holding firm, some "disloyal soldiers [to quote from the *Memoirs*] galloped towards the hill, where Muhammad Ishak was seated, in order to submit to him. He, thinking that these men were galloping towards him to take him prisoner, and that his army was defeated, fled away. His army continued to fight until long after sunset . . . while Ishak busied himself in running away as fast as he could. When the news was taken to the soldiers that their master had fled, they

[1] The story runs that the founder of the sect was a potter who, while tending the firing furnace, repeated the name of Allah so intently that it appeared on each of the pots. Hence the sect of Nakhshband, which signifies an engraver.

lost heart, and were ultimately defeated. In short, on September 29 a glorious victory was won by my General, Ghulam Haidar Khan." Surely this is one of the most dramatic stories of Eastern warfare! The punishments inflicted on the rebels, as might be expected, were extremely severe.

The Hazara Rebellion.—The last of these rebellions was that of the Hazaras, who, as already mentioned, inhabit the heart of Afghanistan, holding the mountainous country from Kabul, Ghazni and Kalat-i-Ghilzai westwards to the neighbourhood of Herat. They are a mixed race; the descendants of a military colony founded by the Mongols. They were notorious raiders and, as members of the Shia sect, hated the Afghans. In 1888 the Shaykh Ali tribesmen, who inhabited the district to the south-west of Balkh, revolted, but were pardoned. Two years later they again revolted. A punitive expedition was despatched: "They were defeated, some were killed, others submitted to my rule, the remainder being brought to Kabul as prisoners. I treated the prisoners very kindly and soon restored them to their homes."

Again, in the spring of 1891, the Hazaras living in the Ghazni area revolted. To quote the Amir once again: "The Hazaras had raided and plundered the neighbouring subjects for about 300 years past, and none of the Kings had had the power to make them absolutely peaceful. They considered themselves rather too strong to be defeated, and were very proud of their power." However, the Amir's army defeated the rebels and occupied Uruzghan, the strongest centre of the Hazaras.

The Final Crushing of the Hazaras.—It might have been thought that a third defeat of the rebels, with the capture of their leader, would have ended the rebellion. But Muhammad Husayn, Hazara, who had commanded the Afghan troops in this successful campaign and had been appointed Governor of Hazarajat, turned traitor and incited other tribes of the Hazaras to join him. On this occasion the Amir issued a call for volunteers to fight the heretical Shia Hazaras. Some thousands of his subjects, inspired by fanaticism and hopes of slaves and plunder,

started under their Chiefs for the Hazara country, which was invaded from every direction, and by the capture of the traitorous Muhammad Husayn Khan and other leaders the Amir crushed this, the last rebellion.

The Amir gazetted a Grand Cross of the Bath.—Abdur Rahman was gazetted a G.C.B., and on being presented with the insignia he referred to his friendly alliance with the British and declared: "I will wear the insignia on a battlefield in the presence of the Russians".

Shahzada *Nasrulla Khan's Visit to England in* 1895.—Abdur Rahman's main object in wishing to visit England himself, or to send his son as his representative, was to secure direct communication with the British Government. He wished to have an Ambassador in London and would possibly have accepted the appointment of a British Ambassador at Kabul. He contended that, as independent Amir of Afghanistan, an Ambassador was the proper intermediary, and that he was denied a privilege which was accorded to the Shah of Persia. He had written a letter to Lord Salisbury in 1892, the gist of which was that the Government of India did not treat him as a friend and made complaints against him, and that he desired direct communication with the English Government. To this Lord Salisbury wrote a friendly reply stating that Lord Lansdowne was the sincere friend of His Highness and it was hoped to hear through the Viceroy that outstanding questions had been settled between him and His Highness, who would then be invited to pay a visit to the Court of Her Majesty.

The Amir decides to send Nasrulla Khan.—Owing to the serious state of his health, which also precluded the possibility of allowing Habibulla to leave Afghanistan, the Amir decided to send his second son, *Shahzada* Nasrulla Khan, to represent him in England. To guide him, we learn that a book of instructions, which he was ordered to follow implicitly throughout the whole of his journey, was composed by his father.

The Reception of Nasrulla Khan by the Queen-Empress.—The *Shahzada* landed at Portsmouth on May 24 and was greeted with a royal salute. He was received

unofficially at Windsor on May 27, and read a message from the Amir, expressing regret at being unable to visit Her Majesty in person and trusting that friendly relations between the two countries would be more firmly established by his son's visit. The *Shahzada* attended the Derby, a review at Aldershot, made a provincial tour, was present at Ascot and, on July 2, travelled in state to Windsor, where he presented Her Majesty with the letter of which he was the bearer from the Amir, and also with valuable presents.

The Request for the Appointment of an Ambassador in London.—On July 20 he was accorded a farewell audience. On this occasion he addressed the Queen from a paper written in Persian, which expressed the one request of the Amir, that there should be permanently appointed in London a trustworthy person or, in other words, an Ambassador. This letter was, almost certainly, taken from the book of instructions.

The Reply of the Secretary of State for India.—The reply of Lord George Hamilton was that, owing to the greater proximity of the Government of India, the better local information at the disposal of the Viceroy, and the exalted position of Her Majesty's representative, the present procedure was the more convenient one.

The Letter of Lord Salisbury.—Finally, Lord Salisbury, in a letter to the Amir, pointed out that the presence of a British officer at Kabul had on two occasions led to tragic events which are still remembered, and that until a British officer could with safety live at Kabul and travel in the country, it would not be possible to receive an Afghan envoy in England. In the same letter it was mentioned that the Queen-Empress had been pleased to confer the G.C.M.G. on Habibulla Khan and on Nasrulla Khan.

The Disappointment of the Amir.—The Amir was bitterly disappointed at his failure to establish direct relations with the British Government and expressed his feelings as follows: "It is the custom, not only among the aristocracy, but among our poorest people as well, that a guest should never return in despair at his

request being refused, even if he be an enemy. . . . But my son, who was the son of a sovereign and the guest of another illustrious sovereign, was returned with a dry but polite refusal to my request." It remains to add that Nasrulla Khan, who viewed every honour that was paid to him with suspicion, remained hostile to Great Britain to the end of his life.

The Subjugation of Kafiristan, 1895–1896.—The political situation of Kafiristan was indirectly settled by the following clause in the Durand Agreement: "The British Government thus agrees to His Highness the Amir retaining Asmar and the valley above it as far as Chanak. His Highness agrees on the other hand, that he will at no time exercise interference in Swat, Bajaur or Chitral, including the Arnawai or Bashgul Valley." The Amir, however, maintained that the Arnawai and Bashgul Rivers were not synonymous, the former draining into the Kunar from the east, the latter from the west. The Government of India, as we have seen, wisely conceded the point, and the Amir decided to annex this mountainous country. He mentioned that, among his reasons was the risk of Russia suddenly seizing the country, the military objection to leaving warlike raiding tribes unsubdued, and the benefits to commerce that the opening up the routes from Jalalabad, Asmar and Kabul towards the north would ensure.

A Successful Winter Campaign.—Abdur Rahman decided that the best season for annexing the country would be the winter, when the Kafirs were perforce confined to the valleys. The campaign was conducted with considerable skill, columns being quietly organized to invade the country from the west through the Panjshir to Kullum, the strongest fort in the country, from Asmar on the east, and from Badakhshan on the north; a small force also marched from Laghman on the south-west. Kafiristan was conquered, without very great difficulty—within forty days, according to the Autobiography. Many of its inhabitants were settled in the province of Laghman, while their country was occupied by retired soldiers and other Afghans. The Kafirs were forcibly

converted to Islam, and their country renamed Nuristan or "The Land of Light".

Troubles on the North-West Frontier, 1897.—The defeat by the Sultan of the Greeks,[1] the commitments of Great Britain in the Sudan, taken together with the ceaseless advance of the British, constituted the main factors underlying the tribal risings. British prestige for a while was low, and the Amir, who was undoubtedly influenced by these events, addressed an important assembly of *mullas* and declared that it was the duty of all true believers to kill the infidels and, at this time, he assumed the title of "Light of the Nation and Religion". He also published an "Almanac of Religion", which dealt with *jihad*.

Lord Curzon and Abdur Rahman.—Lord Curzon landed at Bombay on December 30, 1898. He had already travelled widely in Asia and, in 1894, he had made a remarkable journey to the Pamirs and proved that the River Panja, issuing from a glacier of the Wakhijir Pass, was the true Oxus. He had next visited the Amir at Kabul where he spent a fortnight, having constant interviews with his host, who in a conversation announced for the first time that it was his definite determination that he should be succeeded by Habibulla.[2]

The Amir, who had tried without success to obtain money from the Government of India for the construction of an elaborate system of fortification along his northern frontier, commented adversely on the construction of forts by the British on the North-West Frontier, exclaiming, "We are members of the same house, and to that house there should be but one wall".

When Lord Curzon was appointed Viceroy it was hoped in London that his personal influence would result in improved relations with the stubborn Amir. This showed an entire lack of comprehension of that potentate's point of view. Abdur Rahman had made a confidant of Curzon and had hoped that, as a Member of Parliament,

[1] In Makran the fanaticism excited by the defeat of the nation of Alexander "Lord of the Two Horns" at the hands of the Turks, led to the murder of a British Inspector of Telegraphs. *Vide* Sykes, *Ten Thousand Miles in Persia*, p. 274.

[2] I have consulted *The Life of Lord Curzon*, by the Earl of Ronaldshay, 3 vols., 1928.

he would constitute his ace of trumps and would aid him to escape from the Government of India, which he cordially disliked, by gaining direct communication with London. Somewhat naturally, to the Amir, the appointment could only present itself to his subtle mind as a prearranged plan and, since Curzon made no efforts to win him over by a display of tact and friendliness, their relations remained unsatisfactory throughout.

The Progress effected by Abdur Rahman.—There is no doubt that during his ten years of exile Abdur Rahman observed keenly and learned much from Russian administration, which constituted a considerable improvement on the chaotic rule of the incapable *Khans* it replaced. He also learned much from the English. Perhaps his most important reform was that of justice. When he took over the government the price of a life was 400 (Kabuli) rupees.[1] He instituted the law that a murderer is entirely at the mercy of the relatives of the murdered person. In case they chose to accept a money ransom, it was fixed at 7000 (Kabuli) rupees and, even then, the Government still retained the right of granting or withholding pardon. Again, by Afghan custom, if a woman lost her husband, his next-of-kin had the right of marrying her against her wish. The new law declared that the woman was entirely free upon the death of her husband. To take the question of administration, he created government departments modelled closely on the system prevailing in Europe. Nor did he forget education or hospitals.

The Organization of the Afghan Army.—His father, following the advice of Campbell, the soldier of fortune referred to in Chapter XXXIX, had organized his force into divisions, brigades and regiments of cavalry and infantry with batteries of artillery, this replacing the old order under which the army was simply a mass of fighting men. Abdur Rahman also instituted training for the officers, tested by examinations. Recruiting for the army was organized on the system termed *Hasht Nafri*, or "one man in eight". The Afghan army, as we have

[1] A Kabuli, or Afghani rupee, is worth about one quarter of an Indian rupee.

seen, gained much experience in the rebellions that were so frequent and Abdur Rahman watched the behaviour of each unit, punishing with grim severity incompetence or cowardice. He was fond of quoting from Jami:

> The mass of an army is not the only thing required,
> Two hundred competent warriors are better than one hundred thousand shouters.

Realizing that it was essential to have a munitions factory and powder mills, Abdur Rahman employed British engineers, chief among whom was Sir Salter Pyne. Under their supervision, a mint, tanning and dyeing, furnaces for smelting ore, and other factories gradually dotted the country round Kabul. The story runs that when a soap factory was opened some poorer Afghans ate the soap and thanked the angry Amir for providing them with a new and delicious sweetmeat!

The energy that was needed to induce the conservative Afghans to support these enlightened efforts was tremendous. They complained that the work could be better done by hand and that buying machines meant sending money out of the country. But the Amir, who was a good mechanic himself, quoted Sadi:

> If a gentle-armed man fights with an iron-arm,
> It is sure that the iron-arm will break the gentle-arm.

Abdur Rahman was certainly the " iron-armed man ".

The Death of Abdur Rahman, October 1, 1901.—For the last ten years of his life the Amir was constantly suffering from attacks of gout, which gradually took a stronger hold upon him until he was unable to stand and had to be carried about even in his room. In the spring of 1901 he had a stroke but lingered on until his death on October 1.

His Character.—To understand the character of Abdur Rahman it is necessary to realize that both ruler and ruled belonged to the Middle Ages. The Great Amir — he surely merited the title — broke the feudal power of the local chiefs and the fanatical leadership of the *mullas*, and, by his genius, welded the country into the kingdom of Afghanistan. He certainly used both whips

and scorpions, dealing with stiff-necked tribes, whose evil ways he rebuked in a manner that reminds one of the Jewish Prophets. His justice was grim and cruel, very cruel according to our standards. But, in dealing with his stubborn, treacherous subjects, his methods were the only methods that would have secured law and order. It was typical rough justice of the only kind that his people understood, while they also realised that he was a devout Moslem. Again, his system of espionage, owing to which no one was safe from arrest on a charge of treason, with every chance of a painful death or long imprisonment, created an atmosphere of fear or mistrust, but, yet, in Afghanistan of that period, it was probably inevitable.

Abdur Rahman realized that he must rule with a rod of iron, but he was far ahead of Dost Muhammad in his statesmanship. He realized also that his grandfather's policy of making his numerous sons rulers of the various provinces, each with his own force and revenue, involved a fratricidal struggle for power on his death. Indeed, nothing is clearer in the history of Afghanistan than the constant civil wars, occasioned in almost every case by revolts of brothers or sons of the ruling Amir. To obviate this evil Abdur Rahman kept all his sons at Kabul, while he gradually placed Habibulla, his eldest son, in charge of every department, only retaining the conduct of foreign affairs in his own hands. He also insisted on his younger sons taking part in the administration but, at the same time, attending the daily durbar of Habibulla. As he wrote: " None of them [*i.e.* the younger sons] are in a position to take up arms against that one who has absolute control over the army, the treasury and everything else ".

His advice to his sons and successors was " to struggle day and night for the peace, happiness and welfare of their subjects. If the people are rich, the kingdom is rich — if the subjects are peaceful, the Government is at peace." He also quoted Sadi on this subject:

> Subjects are like roots and kings like trees;
> Trees, O my children, cannot stand without their roots.

In reading the Life of William the Conqueror, whose eldest son rebelled and whose half-brother Odo he was obliged to imprison, we realize the difficulties with which he was faced. To quote the Peterborough Chronicle of 1087: "Stark man he was and great awe men had of him. So harsh and cruel was he that none dared withstand his will. . . . If a man would live and hold his lands, need it were he followed the King's will."

It is generally considered that William was cruel, from policy rather than from character. In reading the lives of these two great warriors, both of whom were dominating personalities and possessed of genius, both of whom created a kingdom, and both of whom sought to establish law and order by means which appear cruel to us in the twentieth century, I would ask if there is not some similarity between William the Conqueror of England and Amir Abdur Rahman of Afghanistan. However this may be, the British policy of proclaiming Abdur Rahman Amir of Kabul was justified by its fruits. It gave us thirty-nine years of a united Afghanistan which, if not always friendly to Great Britain, constituted a valuable asset in the Great War.

CHAPTER XLVI

THE McMAHON MISSIONS

The vagaries of the Helmand in Seistan, where it is the boundary between Persia and Afghanistan, have led to two Boundary Commissions in thirty years.—LORD CURZON on Frontiers.

O Seistan! May the clouds refuse their beneficent rain, may ruins and the desert cover thy soil! In winter, thou art a place of suffering and misfortune; in summer, a mass of serpents and insects. Allah created thee as a punishment to men, and has made thee a hell.—From an Arab poem.

Four Boundary Commissions.—In this chapter I have dealt with the two Missions carried out by Sir Henry McMahon. The first was the Indo-Afghan frontier. In the second he was appointed to arbitrate between Persia and Afghanistan on the questions that had arisen owing to a change in the course of the Helmand in the delta province of Seistan. I have also given a brief account of the delimitation of the western frontier of Afghanistan from a point near Bandan to the vicinity of the Hashtadan Plain by General Fukhur-ud-Din, a Turkish officer, in 1935, and, finally reference is made to the arbitral award on the Hashtadan Plain by Major-General C. S. MacLean, in 1891.

The Indo-Afghan Boundary Commission, 1894–1896.—The first Mission of Captain (later Sir) Henry McMahon was the extremely difficult task of delimiting and demarcating [1] the Afghan frontier from Domandi, situated at the junction of the Gumal and Kundar Rivers to Kuh-i-Malik Siah, where Baluchistan and Afghanistan alike meet the Persian border.

The Area under Discussion.—Geographically speaking, the area falls into two distinct sections. From Domandi

[1] I would acknowledge Sir Henry McMahon's assistance in this chapter.

to Chaman, a distance of 330 miles in length, it consisted of high rugged mountains, inhabited by warlike tribes generally on bad terms with one another, whereas the second section, 470 miles in length, ran through a waterless country, with sandy plains and naked hills which were almost void of inhabitants. Indeed, so little known was the area under consideration, that only three places could be noted with any precision, Domandi, the starting point, New Chaman, situated about half-way along the line, and the terminus at the Kuh-i-Malik Siah, "The Hill of the Black Chief," the word *Malik* probably denoting a pre-Islamic belief in a being, who ranked below a *Pir* or Saint.

The Nomadic or Semi-nomadic Inhabitants.—Apart from the physical difficulties and the danger of a sudden attack, which McMahon only just escaped at the hands of a strong raiding force of Wazir tribesmen, there was the necessarily vague manner in which the course of the line was defined in the Durand Agreement to be taken into consideration. To secure a satisfactory demarcation, it was necessary to ascertain the territorial limits of tribes, who might be wholly or semi-nomadic. Moreover the question of the boundary naturally aroused wild excitement among those concerned which, in the case of the more warlike at feud with one another, created situations fraught with anxiety and danger.

The Ordeal of the Koran.—Fortunately for the peace of the frontier, there existed a method of determining a boundary, a method rarely used and by no means popular, of laying down a boundary line by oath. To quote McMahon: "Let us take a case where both sides have at last agreed to this expedient. Some leading man of the one or the other side is chosen and accepted by both sides for the ordeal. Then, when his reluctance to undergo that ordeal has been overcome, the fateful moment arrives amid a scene of excited tribesmen stilled for the moment by anxious expectation. With the Koran firmly held on his bare head and with bare feet, the oath-taker steps forward, but not until every care has been taken to ensure that no loophole has been left him for the

saving of his soul from the sin of perjury. The Koran must be a genuine Koran; it must be held on his bare head, with nothing intervening; and the soles of his feet must be both bare and clean, with no particle of his own tribal soil adhering thereto. Thus prepared the oath-taker steps out, and the course he follows becomes the boundary line of tribal territory." [1]

The Arrival of the British Commission at Domandi.—McMahon reached Domandi on April 5, 1894. The Commission included a strong survey party with an escort of 150 men of the Punjab Frontier Force and a squadron of cavalry; including contingents of friendly tribesmen it amounted to 1000 men and 500 animals. On arrival at Domandi, there was no definite news of the appearance of *Sirdar* Gul Muhammad, the Afghan Commissioner, but this delay enabled McMahon, not only to extend his survey operations, but also to gain contact with the local tribesmen, and to institute inquiries.

The Gumal Pass.—The Gumal River cuts its way through the Sulaiman range and issues on to the Derajat plains of the Punjab. The Gumal Pass has, from ancient days, constituted a great trade-route between Afghanistan and India. The Ghilzai and Lohani tribes, commonly known as the Powindahs, march down it in their thousands every autumn with their families, their camels, their sheep and their goats. At this period they were marching back to their mountain pastures and complained bitterly of attacks by Wazir tribesmen, which had caused serious loss of life and of camels.

The Appearance of an Afghan Representative.—On May 30, the representative of the Afghan Commissioner, *Khalifa* Mir Muhammad, appeared on the scene. He was accompanied by various chiefs of the Ghilzai tribe, who were quarrelling among themselves regarding certain vague claims which they each made against one another to lands on the British side of the proposed boundary line. With the idea of avoiding bloodshed, they had

[1] "International Boundaries", by Colonel Sir Henry McMahon, *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, Nov. 15, 1935.

marched by different routes to the British camp, which had been moved some distance up the Kundar to facilitate the extension of the survey. The Afghan party had practically no supplies and welcomed a gift of sheep and other provisions.

The Start of the Negotiations.—When negotiations commenced, it appeared that the Amir had ordered his Commissioner not to meet McMahon in person, but to communicate by letters or verbal messages through envoys. Moreover, the Commissioner did not possess a copy of the map of the Kabul Agreement, but had an entirely different map, on which the boundary was marked in a totally incorrect manner. To add to McMahon's difficulties, the *Khalifa* Mir Muhammad was on bad terms with the Afghan Commissioner.

The British Commissioner surveys the Boundary.—In spite of this almost impossible position, McMahon, while carrying on negotiations, steadily moved onwards along the boundary line, surveying all the time. Reaching the plains of Khurasan, lying at an altitude of some 6000 to 7000 feet above sea-level, the position began to improve. The Amir had apparently hoped to wear out the patience of the British Commissioner, with the object of inducing him to admit indiscriminate Afghan claims, but he had discovered that he was mistaken. The Afghan camp also began to run out of supplies, which were secured by force and rarely paid for, whereas the British, who paid for everything, drew supplies even from distant Ghazni, in spite of the efforts of the Afghan Commissioner to prevent it.

The Question of the Map.—On August 18, the two Commissioners, McMahon and Gul Muhammad, met for the first time. The only topic of conversation was the question of the maps. The *Sirdar* had not received any instructions cancelling the former ones, which laid down that he was to recognize no map but the one with which he had been provided by Abdur Rahman. However, thanks to the communications which had passed between the Government of India and the Amir, the Afghan Commissioner finally received a copy of the Kabul

Agreement map, and this marked a turning-point in the negotiations.

The Demarcation of the Boundary Commences.—It was now possible to commence the demarcation, in spite of constant objections raised by the Afghan representative. He feared the wrath of the Amir who evidently wished to jockey the British; forged documents were also occasionally produced. To add to the difficulties, the country was unexplored and had to be surveyed.

Fortunately the approach of winter, which would not only make the mountains impassable, but would cut off supply caravans, eased the situation and lessened the number of wearisome objections. Finally the boundary was demarcated; the pass over the Khwaja Amran range was crossed just in time; and the British Commissioner descended to the plains and reached New Chaman on Christmas Eve — nine months after starting work.

The Agreement and Maps signed for the First Section.—In spite of infinite trouble caused by the Afghan Commissioner, who wished to deprive New Chaman of the springs on which its water-supply depended, at the end of February 1895 the Afghan Commissioner signed the final agreement and the maps relating to this section of the frontier. He then took his departure.

The New Afghan Commissioner.—*Sirdar* Muhammad Umar Khan, Chief of the Nurzai Durrani tribe, the new representative of the Amir for the second section of the frontier, met McMahon at New Chaman early in March.[1] Owing to intrigues by interested persons he attempted to reopen the boundary question which had been already settled in the neighbourhood of New Chaman, but this was firmly resisted.

The Temporary Break-up of the Mission.—His attitude, however, made progress extremely difficult and it took over a month to demarcate the boundary to a point only some thirty miles from Chaman. The position then became impossible, owing to the unreasonable claims

[1] A good account of the second section of this Boundary Commission and of the Seistan Mission may be read in *The Frontiers of Baluchistan*, by G. P. Tate.

made by the Afghan Commissioner who, although personally willing to accept McMahon's proposals, dared not do so in view of the opposition of the headmen attached to his staff by the Amir. Consequently, in June, the British Mission broke up temporarily, to allow the Government of India to negotiate with the Amir.

The Reassembly of the Mission and Fresh Difficulties.—In January 1896 the work of the Commission recommenced and so did the difficulties. The Viceroy had conceded the district of Iltaz *Karez* to the Afghans and the Amir had agreed, in consideration of this concession, that the boundary should follow straight lines from point to point. However, to his Commissioner he had merely written that "he was to use his wits and be careful that he was not taken in."

The Boundary demarcated to Robat.—There was much discussion about an area known as Bahram Chah, but the Afghans had practically run out of supplies, except such as were furnished by the British and were anxious to complete the work: so finally, the boundary was demarcated up to Robat, where there was a supply of good water.

The March across the Desert.—From Robat it was decided that the two Commissioners should take small parties to the Kuh-i-Malik Siah. The distances from one watering-place to the next, on occasions, were fifty miles and, in one case, seventy miles, which necessitated carrying a water-supply for two or three days on the unfortunate camels, who suffered great hardships as, owing to a prolonged drought, there was no moisture in the dried-up bushes on which they fed. The marches were made at night to avoid the heat of the day, but the lack of competent guides, and the sandstorms which obliterated the tracks of the caravan, nearly caused the loss of individuals belonging to both parties, while the heat by day was severe. There were many escapes from horned vipers and other poisonous snakes, which abound in arid Baluchistan.

The Kuh-i-Taftan.—As the Commissioners approached the Persian frontier the white summit of Kuh-i-Taftan,

rising to a height of 13,270 feet, was visible, and, on reaching the border, abundant supplies of good water were found, while some sheep were purchased. McMahon notes that for a space of nine weeks only three inhabitants of this desolate area had been seen!

The Cairn erected on Kuh-i-Malik Siah.—The Gaud-i-Zireh, a salt lake some twenty-five miles wide, which is mentioned in the motto, was next visited. The long two years' task was now practically completed and, on April 16, 1896, a massive stone cairn was built on the summit of the trijunction of the three states, amid general rejoicings. The two Commissioners met again at Robat and, in May 1896, the final agreements and maps, dealing with a boundary line measuring 470 miles, were completed and signed.

The Results.—The total length of the boundary which had been delimitated and demarcated between March 1894 and May 1896, amounted to 800 miles. The question of securing for the railhead at New Chaman, not only the valuable water-supply as negotiated by Durand, but also sufficient room for its future growth, was perhaps the most important military question to be settled. Of some importance, however, was the inclusion in British Baluchistan of Chagai, which, in spite of protests, had been held for many years by the Amir.

The Benefits to Afghanistan.—The benefits to Afghanistan were also considerable. There is nothing which causes more hostility between neighbouring peoples than a disputed boundary, and the removal of this cause along a long boundary line, together with the gradual incorporation of its tribes in the two administrations, made for peace and progress.

In conclusion, there is a saying that "when Allah the Almighty created the world, Baluchistan was formed from the refuse material." Only those who like myself have travelled widely in this desert country can realize the constant difficulty of procuring food, forage and grazing, while the scanty water supplies would almost invariably be described as undrinkable on medical analysis. Much credit is then due to the members of

both Commissions who, in the face of hardships and risks, successfully completed a most important task.

The Seistan Arbitration Commission.—In January 1903, McMahon left Quetta at the head of a Mission, to act as British Commissioner and Arbitrator between Afghan and Persian claims in the delta province of Seistan. In Chapter XXXVI I have given an account of the Goldsmid Mission which constituted the Helmand as the boundary. It also laid down somewhat vaguely the Kuh-i-Malik Siah as "a fitting point" to the south, while "a line drawn from the *Naizar* or Reed Area to the Kuh Siah near Bandan constituted the north-west terminal point". As already described, General Goldsmid was seriously hampered both by the local authorities and by the Persian Commissioner and was unable to obtain a thorough knowledge of the country. Such, then, was the state of affairs, which worked without serious local troubles, until in 1896 a new situation developed by the Helmand changing its course westwards and creating a new main channel known as the Rud-i-Parian.

The Situation in 1899.—When I founded the British Consulate in Seistan, in 1899, I speedily realized that the change in the course of the Helmand created an entirely new situation.[1] I travelled widely in the cultivated area and, crossing the Rud-i-Parian, entered the district of Mian Kangi, which was covered with a dense growth of tamarisk some twenty feet high. It was formerly thickly populated, as was proved by a number of mounds rising perhaps eighty feet above the surrounding country, on some of which were ruins of fortified villages.

Reaching a shallow dry river-bed some thirty feet wide, I was at first inclined to doubt the guide's statement that this was the old bed of the Helmand. But there was no doubt about it nor of the fact that the Sikhsar, as it was termed, was still considered to mark the boundary. Northwards from a low mound termed the Tappa-i-Tilái the eye ranged over miles of thirsty ground covered with the dry roots of reeds. In the absence of life-giving

[1] *Ten Thousand Miles in Persia*, pp. 361-393.

water there was the stillness of death.

Russian Intrigues.—It seems probable that no serious disputes would have arisen between the Afghans and Persians — there were none when I was in Seistan — but for the arrival on the scene, in 1900, of M. Miller, who, as Russian Consul, exerted his undoubted talents to create mischief between the two nations, hoping thereby to be appointed to settle their differences. Owing to the tension which was created through his intrigues, a Persian Commissioner, Yamin-i-Nizam, was appointed to settle boundary disputes with an Afghan Commissioner, Musa Khan of Herat. The latter made fruitless attempts to meet the Persian Commissioner, who treated him with gross discourtesy, and the Governor of Chakansur brought matters to a climax by occupying an important Persian village in Mian Kangi. This act caused the situation to become really serious, and the Persian Government, under the terms of Article 6 of the Treaty of 1857, called upon the British to intervene. Arbitration was then accepted by both the Afghan and Persian Governments, with the right of appeal to the British Foreign Minister.

The Composition of the British Mission.—The Mission comprised 11 British officers, with an escort of 200 infantry and 60 cavalry. Its total strength amounted to 1500 officers and men, 156 horses, 2200 baggage and 50 riding camels. A large staff of surveyors, levellers and draughtsmen was included, while skilled artisans of all kinds completed a body of men especially well constituted for their very difficult task. There was no intention, on this occasion, of permitting His Majesty's Commissioner to be flouted and baffled by local unfriendliness.[1]

The March of the Mission to Seistan.—The Mission left Quetta on January 10, 1903, in severe weather. On its arrival at Khwaja Ali on the Helmand, on February 4, it was received by the Afghans with honour. Further on, in Rudbar, the Afghan Commissioner, *Akhundzada* Fakir Muhammad Khan, Governor of Chakansur, joined it, and

[1] *Vide* "Recent Survey and Exploration in Seistan" by Colonel Sir Henry McMahon, *Geog. Journ.*, Sept. and Oct. 1906.

on February 20 it camped at Khwabgah opposite the Band-i-Seistan. To mark the friendly feelings of the Amir a detachment of Afghan cavalry and infantry was ordered to form the personal escort of the British Commissioner, while the members of the Mission were treated as the guests of the Amir during their stay in Afghan territory.

Further Russian Intrigues.—As already stated, the disputes regarding the Seistan boundary and irrigation canals were mainly the result of mischievous instigation by the Russian Consul, M. Miller,[1] who hoped by these means to secure Russian intervention. When, however, these disputes were referred to the British Government, every effort was made by Russia to persuade Persia to withdraw from the arbitration. The importance of the differences was minimized on the one hand while, on the other, the Persians were informed that the British undoubtedly intended to seize the fertile province; or, failing that, to cede a large part of it to Afghanistan. The Russians urged their right to be represented in the Mission, but this was denied by the British, and McMahon received instructions accordingly.

Failing in this direction, the Persian Commissioners, the Yamin-i-Nizam and the *Karguzar*, or Foreign Office Agent, were reminded of the insults to which the Goldsmid Mission had been subjected, and were urged to repeat the same tactics. Incidentally the *Karguzar* was the nephew of the obstructive Masum Khan, while his Assistant was the son of that official! In short, every effort was made by the Russian representative, who was aided and abetted by the Persian Commissioners, to ensure the failure of the Mission and to reduce British arbitration to a farce.

The Claims of the Persian Officials.—Upon the arrival of the Arbitration Mission in Seistan the Persian Commissioners were informed by their Government that the arbitration applied only to water questions. McMahon,

[1] M. Miller founded the Russian Consulate at Kerman in 1904, where he also displayed considerable energy in anti-British intrigue without, however, gaining any marked success.

however, insisted on their accompanying him along the portion of the boundary that was disputed. They contended that the award map of Sir Frederic Goldsmid was no authority and that in the section south of Kuhak the boundary should run not in a straight line to Kuh-i-Malik Siah but should include the Tarakun tract. Northwards it followed the Helmand and the Sikhsar channel and thence northwards to the northern edge of the *hámun* and so to Siah Kuh.

The Afghan Claims.—The Afghan Commissioner, on the contrary, considered that the line shown on Goldsmid's award map constituted the sole authority on the subject. To summarize these views: the Persians based their claims on their own interpretation of the award and professed complete ignorance as to the map, while the Afghans knew nothing about the award and insisted upon strict adherence to the map.

The Decisions taken by McMahon.—McMahon had ordered a new survey of the area to be made on a large scale, and based on this, in spite of difficulties caused by the complete change in the landscape, he decided on a line which fulfilled the conditions laid down by Goldsmid. Starting northwards from Kuhak, no question as to the boundary arose until Mian Kangi was reached. There the Afghans had encroached to the west of the old Helmand, and McMahon decided to take advantage of a number of mounds, Tappa-i-Tilái, Tappa-i-Shahraki and Tappa-i-Kurki, which ran parallel to the Sikhsar, since the ancient bed of the Helmand, shrunk to a small dry ditch, would have been unsuitable for the purpose. Continuing northwards along a spit of land which contained a miserable village, Takht-i-Shah, the subject of much discussion, and which ended at Shalghami, he decided to draw the line east of this tract and from Shalgami straight to the terminal point at Siah Kuh, which was also called Nar Ahu. Southwards from Kuhak he decided upon a straight line to Malik-Siah Kuh.

The Attitude of the Persian Government.—Such were the decisions arrived at, but the Persian Government,

frightened by the Russian Legation into the belief that British arbitration would result in large portions of Persian Seistan being ceded to Afghanistan, still contended that no boundary questions were involved. However, in June 1903, an opportune quarrel over the disputed lands on the frontier, in which some Afghans were wounded, gave McMahon the desired opportunity of intervening, and he issued an arbitrary order in the form of an intermediate award, laying down the boundary along the mounds mentioned above and calling upon both Commissioners to order their respective subjects to observe it.

The Acceptance of McMahon's Decision.—After much intrigue at Tehran, in which the Russian Legation took a leading part, the Persian Government, in November 1903, finally accepted McMahon's line unconditionally. The Afghan Commissioner, whose attitude throughout these tedious years deserves a special tribute, also agreed to it, but stated that the Amir might think it unbecoming to his dignity to show undue alacrity in expressing his approval. This supposition proved to be entirely correct, and it was not until September 1904 that the news of the acceptance of the award by His Highness reached McMahon. The demarcation was then carried out to the genuine satisfaction of those most intimately concerned.

Summary.—The British Commission had spent over two years suffering from heat and cold and from insect pests which took a very heavy toll of camels and horses. The force of the blizzards was also terrific, one being recorded with a velocity of 120 miles an hour, which constitutes a record.

Worse than these plagues was the fact that in the winter of 1904–1905 a serious outbreak of hydrophobia infected the dogs, jackals and wolves of the country, who went mad and attacked men and animals. On the night that the great storm was raging, mad wolves attacked the camp and bit seventy-eight camels, of whom more than one half subsequently developed hydrophobia. But the culminating tragedy was the death of *Shaykh*

Mohiuddin, a gallant surveyor, who, penetrating into the unexplored Dasht-i-Margo with a small party, lost his life from thirst. One of his chain-men with supreme heroism wrapped the precious map round his body and, half unconscious, tottered off with his comrades. He alone was succoured by an Afghan. This expedition cost seven valuable lives.

To conclude: the strategical position of Seistan with reference to the security of the Indian Empire made it an object of a political attack by Russia at a period when, as is shown in Chapter XLIX, Anglo-Russian relations were undergoing a crisis. Thus the task that McMahon undertook was rendered doubly difficult, and its successful accomplishment proves the courage, tact and patience which he displayed, while he was loyally supported by his staff, his escort and the native followers.

The Frontier from Seistan to the Hashtadan Plain.— In 1935 General Fakhur-ud-Din Altái, a Turkish officer, was appointed arbitrator between the Persian and Afghan Governments, with a mission to settle the Perso-Afghan boundary on the undefined section from Siah Kuh, in the vicinity of Bandan, to a point where General MacLean, in 1891, demarcated the boundary of the Hashtadan Plain.

The new boundary at first runs due north, keeping well to the west of the assumed line. In 1899 I followed a parallel route along it and, from Duruh, I climbed the range to the east. It rises to an altitude of 6000 feet and on its summit I found a fort of solid construction with three or four empty water-tanks. I enjoyed an extensive view eastwards, where the ranges sank down to the aptly named Dasht-i-Naumid or " Desert of Despair ". Farther north, the fort at Tabas Sunnikhana, a fertile district, was said to have been built by the architect who designed the Herat fort. The new boundary line from opposite Duruh turns north-north-west and then north-north-east to Yezdan, around which it circles, thus leaving that village to Persia. From the vicinity of Yezdan the boundary swings north-west for a short

distance, but finally resumes a general north-north-west direction to latitude 34° 15′. There it bends due east to the previously demarcated point 39 on the Hashtadan Plain.

The Arbitral Award on the Hastadan Plain.—The question of the frontier in this area had caused much local ill-feeling, but an application for the good offices of the British Government resulted in an arbitral award given by Major-General C. S. MacLean in 1888 and, in 1891, the boundary was duly demarcated by that officer.

The Completion of the Boundaries of Afghanistan.—From the Hashtadan area the Perso-Afghan boundary strikes the Hari Rud at the point where it bends to the north, and this river continues to be the frontier to Zulfikar Pass, where our survey ends.

It is impossible to conclude the account of these Boundary Commissions, which were carried through under such difficulties and with some loss of life, without paying a tribute to the magnificent services of the British and Indian officials who endured so greatly and who, supported throughout by loyal staffs and followers, achieved so much for the benefit of Afghanistan.

CHAPTER XLVII

AMIR HABIBULLA KHAN NEGOTIATES A NEW TREATY

Afghanistan is the door of India, and the safety of India depends on keeping that door strong and shut.—KING HABIBULLA KHAN.

The Situation after the Death of Abdur Rahman.—When the Amir was at the point of death the princes and leading officials, who had been warned, assembled in the *Bagh-i-Bala* palace. During the night of October 1, upon the announcement of his death, a high official took the late Ruler's *kulla* and, setting it on Habibulla's head, declared him Amir. The princes and officials approved the act, and, taking him by the hand, one by one proffered their allegiance to him.[1] Habibulla then proceeded to the Ark, situated inside Kabul, which was strongly held by reliable troops, and contained the arsenal and treasury; in the morning, the corpse of the Amir was also brought to the same stronghold.

Rumours of Risings and the Burial of Abdur Rahman.—It was generally expected that, as was customary, there would be a mutiny of the troops, and the citizens prepared for trouble by burying their jewels, strengthening their poor defences and buying up supplies. Wild men from the countryside, clad in rags, appeared in the city bazaars like vultures, and added to the apprehension that was felt. It was also rumoured that there was a plot to seize and cut into pieces the late Amir's body on the way to the tomb, which he had constructed outside Kabul, but this plot, if it existed, was foiled by the burial, on the morning of October 2, of the corpse close to the Ark.

The spirit of the soldiers was undoubtedly mutinous, but the policy of the late Amir which permitted no dis-

[1] *Under the Absolute Amir*, by Frank A. Martin, 1907, p. 127 *et seq.*

tinguished soldier, nor indeed any subject, to become powerful, and had concentrated all authority in the hands of Habibulla, averted this very real danger.

Sirdar *Habibulla Khan proclaimed Amir.*—On October 3, 1901, *Sirdar* Habibulla was proclaimed Amir of Afghanistan. The ceremony was both religious and civil. The religious ceremony was conducted by the chief *mulla* of the Juma Masjid, who, after praying, wound a *lungi* of white muslin round the head of the *Sirdar*. A Koran and relics of the Prophet were then presented to him, after which he was declared to be duly elected Amir of Afghanistan.

At the civil ceremony *Sirdar* Nasrulla Khan placed the late Amir's *kulla* on his brother's head; the late Amir's sword was also presented to him. Habibulla then made a speech in which he swore to keep Afghanistan intact, to repel foreign aggression and to promote reforms. He also promised to abolish the hated spy system. Habibulla, whose mother was the daughter of the Mir of Badakhshan, had been born at Samarkand and was thirty-two years of age at the time of his accession.

Habibulla announces his Accession to the Viceroy.—In India grave anxiety, based on alarming rumours in the bazaars, naturally prevailed but, on October 10, Curzon received a letter from Habibulla Khan informing him that " he had been accepted by the army and nation as the lawful sovereign of Afghanistan ". " My duty ", he added, " is to behave in the same manner as my revered father used to do, and I will be a friend of his friends and avoid his enemies." [1]

Lord Curzon's invitation to the New Amir.—In view of the fact that the treaty with the late Amir was considered by the Viceroy to be a personal one, although that was not at all certain, it was decided to inform His Highness that the Agreements with his father could not be renewed without a discussion of various difficult questions, and he was invited to pay a visit to the Viceroy for the purpose. Unfortunately Curzon's dictatorial attitude to the late

[1] In this section I have consulted *The Life of Lord Curzon*, by the Earl of Ronaldshay, three vols., 1928.

Amir had not tended towards an improvement in Anglo-Afghan relations. This is clearly shown by the statement made later by Amir Habibulla at a durbar held on August 21, 1907. On this occasion His Highness, referring to Lord Minto's invitation to him to visit India in 1906, declared: " Before this, Lord Curzon also invited me to India, but his letter was not really a letter of invitation; it was a threat that the subsidy would be stopped if I did not obey the summons ".

The Reply of Habibulla.—In his reply to the invitation of the Viceroy, Habibulla denied that there had been any misunderstanding between the Government of India and his father. He wrote: " My kind friend, I am fully convinced that there is not a single thing, either big or small, omitted from the terms of the Agreement, or which would now be deserving of description or record ".

The non-acceptance by Habibulla of the Viceroy's invitation to meet him at Peshawar in the spring of 1902 was a grievous disappointment to Curzon. He had been most favourably impressed by the new Amir on the occasion of his visit to Kabul, and had described him as " a very charming personality who talked with a wisdom and sense far beyond his years ". Also he had felt that, upon the death of the old Amir, he would be able to place Afghan affairs on a more satisfactory footing.

The Views of Habibulla on the Agreement.—Added to his disappointment was the rigid adherence of the new Amir to the view that the Agreement made by the Government of India with Abdur Rahman was binding on that body as regards himself, and that there was no need for a new Agreement. Early in June Curzon repeated his invitation but received no reply.

The Views of Lord Curzon and of the British Government.—The anxiety of Curzon was increased at this juncture by rumours, which gained some credit on the North-West Frontier, that the Amir was considering an alliance with Russia. The stage was set for a great durbar at Delhi in the following January, and Curzon informed the Secretary of State that, unless the Amir responded to his overtures, he would, upon the con-

clusion of the ceremony, write a stern letter, in language that would compel a reply, upbraiding him for his disloyal and unfriendly attitude and requiring definite assurances from him. Curzon's attitude in demanding a new treaty before paying the subsidy and giving promises of protection was identical with that of Lytton which, as we know, led to the Second Afghan War. The British Government, on the other hand, took the view that the Amir would probably become more friendly if promises of the subsidy and of British protection were given first and other questions were raised later. In any case the Cabinet strongly objected to " any action likely to entail military operations ".

The Letter of Habibulla.—Fortunately the danger of a breach with Afghanistan was averted by the receipt, on December 12, 1902, of a letter from the Amir, which renewed his protestations of friendship and contained his acceptance of British arbitration in Seistan, a question which has been dealt with in the previous chapter. Although this letter was not wholly satisfactory, it opened the way for a resumption of normal relations.

The Dane Mission to Kabul.—During the course of further negotiations and inquiries, it appeared that the unwillingness of the Amir to visit India was partly due to the risks that he might run as to the stability of his position by leaving Afghanistan. It was therefore decided to despatch Mr. (later Sir Louis) Dane on a Mission to Kabul. He was instructed to insist that the engagements made with Abdur Rahman were personal; he was to embody in a treaty the assurances given to Abdur Rahman in 1880; he was to insist on the absolute control by the British Government of the foreign relations of Afghanistan; he was to offer the Amir the personal subsidy of 18 lakhs granted to his father, provided he displayed a friendly spirit and carried out the stipulations of the Treaty. Other points were that the Amir should assume a benevolent attitude towards the projected railways in the Khaibar and Kurram; that the British Agent at Kabul and the News-writer at Kandahar should be treated with greater courtesy, while the question of

more liberal trade relations was to be discussed. There was also the question of the subsidy which had been withheld.

The Negotiations.—Furnished with a draft treaty which, in substance, repeated the old engagements, Dane entered Afghan territory on November 28, 1904, and, stopping to repair the cairn [1] on Forty-fourth Hill, which had been erected by his cousin Major Waller, he reached Kabul a fortnight later. At the formal durbar held on December 14, and at the first business interview on the following day, the Amir, whose utterances were friendly, evinced anxiety to arrange for some scheme of military co-operation. Indeed, he went so far as to suggest a combined attack on Russia, which Power was, at that time, involved in war with Japan.

Dane had been instructed to advise the Amir that his troops were not sufficiently well organized or equipped to support a serious attack by a Russian army, and that if he desired assistance from Great Britain he must co-operate by the improvement of communications between India and Kabul, and by arranging for consultation with British military experts.

The reply of the Amir was that he fully realized that his army could not resist Russia unaided and that he relied on British support. He was not, however, prepared to allow the construction of a railway from Peshawar to Kabul since that would be regarded by all his subjects as a spear pointed at the heart of Afghanistan. He went on to say that he and his advisers believed that, with British support in munitions and money, the Afghans could effectively hold the Hindu Kush range. But, at the same time, they clearly realized that they could not face the Russians in the open country of Western Afghanistan, on which side the main attack would probably be delivered. If the British would accept the task of guarding their western frontier, land would be given them for a railway or road along the Helmand and also for a cantonment in the fertile area of Seistan. Furthermore, the Amir proposed a continuation of the

[1] *Vide* Chapter XXXII.

railway or road northwards to Hashtadan situated to the south-west of Herat, where a second cantonment would be constructed. "That", he emphatically declared, "would constitute a shield for Afghanistan."

In reporting this far-reaching scheme, Dane urged that were cold water thrown on it, the negotiations in hand would suffer, and that the matter should receive consideration. Curzon, however, curtly replied that Dane was not authorised to discuss the scheme but that, if the Amir visited India, it would be dealt with by the proper authorities.

Dane perforce discouraged the Amir's project of an attack on Russia, while he was not able to give any support to his military scheme, which, to some extent, was actually carried out by the British in the last Great War by the construction of a railway from Nushki, through British Baluchistan and crossing the Persian frontier to the south of Seistan. He also could not hold out any hopes of an increased subsidy, another advantage that the Amir and his Councillors had hoped to secure.

These discouraging statements caused a marked change in the atmosphere. The Amir and his Councillors, who were mortified at their military scheme being entirely ignored, became resentful and suspicious.

The Amir produces a Draft Treaty.—On January 1, 1905, the Amir, who had persistently refused to sign the treaty drafted by the Government of India, brought matters to a head by producing a draft treaty of his own, which, he stated, represented the utmost limits to which he would go. In this remarkable document[1] he asserted that in matters great and small he had acted and would continue to act in accordance with the Agreement made by Abdur Rahman. This draft was not considered acceptable by the Government of India, and Dane, realizing the danger of a deadlock, attempted to help matters by announcing that the intention of the Government of India was to pay up the arrears of the subsidy. The Amir and his Councillors were, however, deeply chagrined by the refusal to discuss their scheme for

[1] It is given as Appendix D.

military co-operation, on which they had evidently set their hearts. They also considered that Russia had been made powerless for many years to come by her defeats at the hands of Japan, and that Afghanistan was strong enough to deal with the Northern Power in case of hostilities. Furthermore, there was the feeling that Great Britain had yielded to Russia in insisting on the evacuation by Afghanistan of Roshan and Shignan, whereas, if left to themselves, the Afghans believed that they could have retained both provinces. Consequently, the attitude was assumed by the arrogant *Sirdars*, his councillors, that the alliance was much more necessary for the British than for themselves, and that they could therefore dictate the terms of any treaty they vouchsafed to negotiate. The situation was furthermore adversely affected by the Amir's serious illness, which lasted from January 12 to the beginning of March, with the unfortunate result that *Sirdar* Nasrulla Khan and Abdul Kuddus Khan, the First Councillor and the *Kotwal* of Kabul, who were both extremely fanatical and anti-British, dominated the negotiations during this period. Later, the return of *Sirdar* Inayatulla Khan, the eldest son of the Amir, from a visit to India where he had been shown much hospitality and friendliness, influenced Habibulla as did his father-in-law who had accompanied the young *Sirdar*. These facts and the recovery of His Highness secured a more friendly attitude.

The Amir's Treaty.—The situation was, however, a difficult one. Curzon advocated that, unless the Amir was prepared to make some advance towards accepting the views of the Government of India, Dane should be instructed to leave Kabul. The British Government, however, decided to accept the Amir's treaty, which did, at any rate, include the obligations undertaken by his father.

The Signing of the Treaty.—This treaty was accordingly signed on March 21, the Afghan New Year's Day. As the Amir was affixing his signature, he shook some ink from his pen over the English copy of the parchment and exclaimed: " It is spoilt; we must write out other

treaties ". Dane, a notable Persian scholar, replied: " This is only a mole on the fair face of the treaty ", and quoted from Hafiz: " If this Shiraz beauty will accept my heart, for her Hindu-dark mole I will give Samarkand and Bukhara ". This apt quotation eased the situation, but Abdul Kuddus exclaimed: " See, Your Majesty, Mr. Dane gives you Samarkand and Bukhara ". But Dane's prompt reply was: " Nay, the mole is on the face of the British treaty and for this the Amir abandons Samarkand and Bukhara ". The treaty is still known as " The Treaty of the Mole ". It must be remembered that the engagements made with Abdur Rahman referred to in Chapter XLIII were contained in letters written to various authorities. Some doubt was expressed by *Sirdar* Nasrulla Khan as to their authenticity. Consequently, after verification, these letters were attached to the treaty.

The Results of the Mission.—It cannot be claimed that this mission was successful in carrying out many important questions that would, it was hoped, be settled. However, the Amir agreed to demarcate the Mohmand boundary at an early date; he showed no hostility to the proposed railways in the Khaibar Pass and the Kurram Valley, while he somewhat improved the status and treatment of the British agent at Kabul and of the newswriters at Kandahar and Herat. Perhaps the best result that was achieved was the contact by the British Commissioner and members of his staff, with officials, officers and other Afghans during their three months' residence in Kabul. It lessened the fanatical, suspicious attitude of the Amir's Councillors and subjects while he himself, in spite of his unfortunate illness, was courteous throughout.

When it was known that the Amir's treaty was to be signed, both the Amir and his Councillors became extremely friendly. They had every reason to feel satisfied. In addition to having had his own way as regards the treaty, Habibulla had gained the acknowledgement of the British Government that he was " Independent King of Afghanistan and its Dependencies ". Independence was the dearest wish of the Amir and of all Afghans.

The Views of the Government of India.—Lord Curzon's Government in their despatch forwarding the report on the Dane mission wrote, in May 1905: "The one satisfaction to which we may look is that the Amir, having obtained his main objects and obtained them in his own way, appears to have been left by the British Mission in a favourable and friendly frame of mind. It is not denied that such an attitude is in itself more valuable than any paper stipulations, but for the value to be substantial, the attitude must be lasting. We have yet to apply it to the test of every-day experience."

The Secretary of State for India on the Mission.—In June 1905, Mr. Brodrick (later, the Earl of Midleton) declared that: "It was not the case that the negotiations had resulted in failure. As stated by Lord Lansdowne, the main objects of our negotiations with the Amir of Afghanistan were, first, to renew the agreements entered into with the late Amir, and, secondly, to have friendly negotiations with him, with regard to a number of subsidiary points. The first object was achieved by an Agreement that covered all the engagements entered into by the Amir Abdur Rahman. We also arrived at a thoroughly friendly understanding with the Amir on a number of subsidiary points." Lord Midleton, in his *Records and Reactions*, sums up: "It would thus appear that the experienced Anglo-Indians on the Council were more than right in warning us that the alternative hectoring policy might have led us into the same morass as Lord Ellenborough and Lord Lytton found themselves before".[1]

The Credit due to Sir Louis Dane.—It was pleasing to note that, in spite of his failure to secure a complete settlement, there was no question as to the ability and courage shown by the British representative while contending for the principles and objects originally put forward. Equally praiseworthy was the dignity with which he acted on the orders to accept the proposals of the Amir. Looking back on these negotiations and realizing the weakness of Habibulla's position, together with the

[1] P. 199.

fanatical, anti-foreign feelings of his advisers and his subjects, it was essential for the Amir to prove that he had won success in his negotiations with the British. This he undoubtedly did and thereby was inclined to be friendly, which attitude led to his important visit to India in 1907. Accepting this point of view, it would appear that the treaty Sir Louis Dane signed was a good treaty. Finally, Curzon's appeal to history warrants it as such. The immediate result was the visit of the Amir to India and the ultimate result was the loyal adherence of His Majesty to his treaty obligations under conditions of considerable difficulty and danger throughout the course of the Great War.

CHAPTER XLVIII

HIS MAJESTY HABIBULLA KHAN VISITS INDIA

In the name of Allah. Dated Jamrud, March 7, 1907. At the time of returning from my journey to India, and of re-entering Afghan territory.

My tour in India, which has lasted sixty-four days, has given me so much pleasure that I cannot find words to express it. Every kindness has been shown to me by the Government of India, His Excellency the Viceroy, the Commander-in-Chief, and other Military officers and Civil authorities in India, and I have found them all friends.

I am able to declare that, during this short tour in India, I have made more true friends for the Government of Afghanistan and for myself than I could have made in twenty years had I not come from Afghanistan to India.—Autograph Message of His Majesty the Amir to Reuter.

Lord Minto's Invitation to the Amir.—During the early months of 1906, it had been reported from various sources that the Amir, if invited to pay a friendly visit to India, would probably accept. Lord Minto[1] accordingly despatched a warm invitation in June 1906, outlining a programme, which would include some big game shooting. The Amir in his reply asked that it should be understood that his visit would be purely a friendly one and that there would be no discussion of the recently signed treaty. This assurance he required in order to satisfy the suspicions of his subjects and thereby gain their approval of his acceptance. It appears that the anti-British Nasrulla Khan opposed the whole project and had asked permission to undertake the pilgrimage to Mecca, but was informed that he must act as Regent in the absence of the Amir.

The Acceptance of the Invitation.—In August at a Durbar the Amir said: "I cannot hesitate to accept the invitation of His Excellency, which is couched in such terms of friendship, expressing a desire for an interview between friends".

[1] Mary, Countess of Minto has very kindly read through this and the following chapter. Her help has been most valuable.

The Amir's Staff and Escort.—Having decided to visit India, the Amir selected the *Sirdars* who were to accompany him, some of whom it was not prudent to leave in Afghanistan during his absence. The total of his party, which included his bodyguard, cavalry and infantry, aggregated some 1100 officers and men. During his absence he arranged for *Sirdar* Nasrulla Khan to assume full powers, while *Sirdar* Inayatulla Khan was placed in charge of the army, but under the supervision of Nasrulla Khan.

The Reception at Landi Khana, January 2, 1907.—The Amir was met upon his arrival at Landi Khana by Sir Henry McMahon, who as a member of the Durand Mission had made his acquaintance at Kabul in 1893, and who had been placed in charge of His Majesty during his visit to India.[1] A salute of thirty-one guns was fired, but of far greater importance was a cable of welcome from the King-Emperor in which, for the first time, he was addressed as "His Majesty".

The Reception at Agra.—Lady Minto gives a brilliant description of the reception of the Amir at Agra, of the investiture of His Majesty with the Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath and of the impression created on him by the review of 30,000 British troops.[2] At the banquet which followed, the Amir, in reply to the Viceroy's speech of welcome, said: "I am very glad that the first occasion on which I left my home has been to come to my friend's house, and I hope and sincerely trust from my heart that I have found a personal friend for myself and for my Government, and I am very highly pleased."

Habibulla and Lord Kitchener.—The Amir was entertained at a banquet by Lord Kitchener who also, apart from a review, had arranged a combined artillery and cavalry display. The Amir then rode past miles of troops, the band of each regiment playing the Afghan Anthem. Finally, he was shown the military balloon and made an ascent in it.

The Visit to Aligarh College.—The Amir displayed

[1] Sir Henry McMahon has kindly read this chapter.

[2] *Minto and Morley*, p. 75 *et seq.*

the keenest interest in the inspection he made of the Moslem College. After examining the students minutely in religious ritual, and in obligations of fasting, in his speech, much to their surprise, he exhorted them to seek Western education.

The Visit to Gwalior.—Later, thanks to the courtesy of His Highness the Maharaja, a visit to Gwalior, with its beautiful palace and gardens, its well-drilled troops and its tiger shooting, was a complete success, more especially as, to his delight, the Amir shot a tiger.

Cawnpore, Delhi and Calcutta.—Cawnpore with its factories, and Delhi with its historical buildings were alike examined in considerable detail, while, at Calcutta, the mint, the museum, the zoological gardens, the hospitals and, perhaps above all, the shops delighted His Majesty, who was indefatigable. He also inspected the ordnance factories at Cossipore and Dum-Dum with the keenest interest, while he expressed his earnest wish to be able to manufacture cordite at Kabul. On another day he was taken round the docks, which deeply impressed an inhabitant of Afghanistan who had never seen a ship. To turn to another question, as was perhaps to be expected from the ruler of a nation clad in sheepskin, he severely criticized the fat bare calves of the Bengalis, while their scanty clothing made him remark: " If the British after 250 years of rule, have not managed to induce them to wear more clothes, it shows that they were not intended by nature to improve! " This attitude recalls the horror of the ancient Persians at the Greeks exercising in a state of nudity. It remains to add that the Amir expressed his ardent wish to be initiated into the mysteries of freemasonry and, not without some difficulty, this was arranged by the Calcutta Lodge.

The Visit to the British Fleet.—At Bombay, where the Afghan monarch described the sea as " quite a large tank," practice of the big guns in the forts had been arranged and the Amir fired a 10-inch gun at a moving target some 5000 yards distant. He also was received by Admiral Sir E. Poe on H.M.S. *Hermes* and visited the engine-room, watched gun drill, and made detailed

inquiries into everything. He fired a torpedo at a moving target with complete success; and lastly, he fired a submerged mine. At dusk he watched the illumination of the fleet.

Karachi and Lahore.—Leaving hospitable Bombay with deep regret, the voyage to Karachi, where all the ships were dressed with flags, was uneventful. After the official reception, the Amir steamed to the Manora entrance of the harbour where an old hulk was blown to atoms by a submarine mine. On the way to Lahore, he stopped to inspect the great bridge over the Indus at Attock. It is interesting to recall that his father, after inspecting it, wrote to Lord Dufferin suggesting various changes and improvements in its structure!

Habibulla was delighted with Lahore, which had once been in the possession of his dynasty. He also visited the Golden Temple at Amritsar, where he made friends with the Sikh priests. "I respect all religions", he said to McMahon, "but despise those who are lukewarm in their own faith." This unusual attitude of toleration to the religion of their hereditary enemies displeased the Afghan *Sirdars*, who also resented the Amir's open friendliness to British officials and their wives.

The Islamia College.—At Lahore the Amir carried out his promise of laying the foundation of the *Islamia* College. His speech ran: "Oh! my Moslem brethren, endeavour to acquire knowledge, so that you may not wear the clothes of the ignorant. It is your duty to acquire knowledge. After your children have thoroughly acquainted themselves with the principles and laws of the faith of Muhammad, turn their attention towards the acquirement of the new sciences, as, unless you acquire Western knowledge, you will remain without bread." He followed up this excellent advice by making a donation of 20,000 rupees towards the building fund and promised an annual grant of 12,000 rupees.

Rawalpindi and Peshawar.—Resuming his journey, the Amir stopped at Rawalpindi where he visited one of the outlying forts. He also inspected the arsenal, and was much impressed by the thousands of rifles — no



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(By favour of Sir Louis Dane)

less than 70,000 being stacked in a single room. He then left for Peshawar.

The Farewell.—The Amir awarded various decorations to the British officers who had served on his staff. He presented McMahon with the Order of the Sardari of the First Class as a token of high esteem, and, in reply to a question, stated that the order had been instituted by his father some years ago, but that hitherto it had not been awarded to anyone.

On the morning of March 7, the Amir accompanied by McMahon drove up the Khaibar Pass to Landi *Kotal*, where he accepted the invitation of the officers of the Khyber Rifles[1] to lunch. He then mounted a horse and rode slowly along the winding mountain road that leads to the British frontier near Landi Khana. There he was met by a force of cavalry and large numbers of tribesmen, who gave him a vociferous welcome. Finally, after embracing McMahon, with tears streaming down his cheeks, he rode off down the valley to Kabul.

Summary.—The Amir, upon his arrival in India, displayed a strong vein of suspicion lest some slight to his own dignity and the honour of Afghanistan might be offered him, but these feelings were soon dissipated by the genuine warmth of his reception, and as the days passed, he became more and more intimate with the officials with whom he was associated. He revealed himself to be a broad-minded, cultured Afghan ruler, possessing a remarkably strong character with a great regard for truth. Deeply religious, he was singularly free from bigotry. On the other hand, he was a shrewd, far-seeing man of business, knowing exactly what he wanted and taking care to secure it. Above everything, he was an ardent patriot, ready to sacrifice himself for his country, and staunchly loyal to his friends, so long as his friends remained loyal to him. He was a good sportsman, a good shot and a good mechanic. Curiously enough he did not speak Pashtu with any fluency.

To conclude, friendship with Sir Louis Dane, which was sincere, induced Habibulla, in spite of strong opposi-

[1] I am bound to retain the old spelling for this force.

tion from his advisers, to accept Minto's invitation to India. At first, like his brother Nasrulla in London, he was suspicious, but gradually it dawned on him that he was being treated not only as a King but also as a friend. He was deeply impressed by the dignity of the Viceroy and the splendour of the official functions. Still more deeply was he impressed by the army, the fleet and the administration. But most of all was he impressed by the personality of Minto, of Kitchener and of many other officials whom he met, while he absolutely trusted and felt deep affection for McMahon. Realizing, as he repeatedly stated, that Russia was *the* enemy of Afghanistan, he made up his mind that he would, through thick and thin, be loyal to his engagements with Great Britain, provided that he was shown equal loyalty and confidence in return. History proves how well he kept his word.

Plot against the Amir.—It was noticed that, owing to the Amir's warm friendship with his English hosts, the members of his entourage considered themselves to have been neglected, which was certainly the case. They also disliked the pleasure he evinced in English society and the courtesy with which he treated Hindus and Sikhs. Above all, they resented the fact of his having been admitted into the brotherhood of freemasonry. Indeed, the admiration for Western civilization which was frankly expressed by Habibulla upon his return to Afghanistan, went far to alienate his conservative subjects. As a proof of these feelings, the *mullas* of Laghman, whose fanaticism was undoubtedly aroused by wild rumours as to his actions in India, plotted against the Amir. But the plot was discovered and the conspirators were executed.

CHAPTER XLIX

THE ANGLO-RUSSIAN CONVENTION

Essential as a friendly Afghanistan may be to our position in India, equally essential, I submit, is a friendly Russia to our general international position, both as regards the actual situation, and also in respect to that in the not distant future. . . . We have secured an undertaking with France. That with Russia is in its very early infancy, and will require, for reasons which I need not explain, careful nurture and treatment. Any serious check to this infant growth may kill it before it has advanced in years, and its disappearance would doubtless eventually react on our relations with France. . . .—SIR ARTHUR NICOLSON to Sir Edward Grey, July 1908.

The Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 produced a *détente*, but not an *entente*.—G. P. GOOCH.

The Anglo-Russian Convention.—In this work, when dealing with the very important question of the Anglo-Russian Convention, I have described it primarily as affecting the Anglo-Afghan relations, which is my main theme. While acknowledging the importance of the Convention on our relations with Persia and Tibet, I have dealt with these questions in a somewhat less detailed form.

Russian Attempts to open up Direct Communication with Afghanistan.—In 1900 a letter dated February 21, which was written by Ignatieff, the Political Officer at Bukhara, to the Afghan Commercial Agent, was communicated by the Amir to the Government of India. In this document Ignatieff expressed the sincere desire that his letter might constitute the first step towards direct friendly relations between the two countries; the document also contained an assurance that " Russia had not, and never had entertained, unfriendly feelings towards Afghanistan ". Reference was further made to the movements of Russian troops in Transcaspia, which had attracted attention, principally owing to their coinciding with the reverses sustained by Great Britain in South Africa.

Count Lamsdorff sought to justify Ignatieff's action and, in London, M. de Staal again raised the question.[1] Lansdowne replied that His Majesty's Government while willing to consider the question in the most friendly spirit, would object to any change being made in the system hitherto observed without their previous consent, and would regard any attempt at such a change as a departure from the understanding between the two Governments and a contravention of the repeated assurances of the Russian Government that they considered Afghanistan to be entirely outside the sphere of their influence.

Habibulla Khan's Declaration.—In September 1902 Habibulla, at a durbar, read out another Russian communication urging the opening of trade-routes for Russian caravans from the railhead at Kushk to Kabul and Herat, and offering in return special trade privileges to Afghan traders. The Amir then announced that his policy was identical with that of his father and replied that all future communications should be addressed through the Government of India. The feeling in the durbar was hostile, and a Chief exclaimed: "Let this Turki dog, who carries messages for Infidels, be beaten on the head with shoes, until his hair falls off. This should be our answer to the Russians."

Serious Russo-Afghan Friction in 1903.—In the spring of 1903 friction had arisen between Russian and Afghan officials owing to the alleged destruction of boundary pillars in the neighbourhood of Herat and other minor incidents. In June it was reported that letters from the Governor of Transcaspia, dealing with these questions, were being received by the Governor of Herat. Lansdowne drew the attention of Count Benckendorff to this, only, at first, to receive an evasive reply. But in a *Pro-Memoria* dated September 22, 1903, in dealing with the question of the replacement of certain pillars on the Russo-Afghan frontier, which the British wished to arrange

[1] I have consulted the admirable *Origins of the War*, vol. iv, by G. P. Gooch and Major H. W. V. Temperley for this chapter. I would also thank the Honble. Harold Nicolson for kindly reading it. *Vide* also Sykes *op. cit.* vol. ii, pp. 410-415.

by the despatch of British and Russian officers, but which the Russians wished to treat as a purely local affair, the Russian minute ended as follows: "Le Ministère des Affaires Etrangères ne peut que réitérer sa ferme décision de suivre le procédé indiqué dans ses communications antérieures et se fait un devoir d'ajouter qu'après les explications franches qu'il était à même de donner à ce sujet, il considère la question dont il s'agit comme définitivement close ".

Lansdowne informed Benckendorff that His Majesty's Government deeply resented the tone of the Russian communication and had written a long despatch to the British Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburg, which was intended as a defence of British conduct and, he was afraid he must add, an indictment of that of the Russian Government. A copy of this despatch, which had been withheld owing to conciliatory communications from Lamsdorff, was now handed to Benckendorff to read.

Anglo-Japanese Treaties, 1902 *and* 1905.—In 1902, Great Britain, renouncing definitely her policy of isolation, negotiated a treaty with Japan by the terms of which, "in the event of either party becoming involved in war with a third Power, the other Power was to remain neutral unless any other Power or Powers should join in hostilities against that ally, when the contracting party will come to its assistance". Three years later, in 1905, a Treaty of Alliance was concluded, which bound the contracting parties to come to each other's assistance in case of unprovoked attack on the part of any other Power or Powers; this treaty was renewed in 1911.

In October 1905 Sir Charles (later Lord) Hardinge asked Count Lamsdorff to express his opinion on the Anglo-Japanese Treaty. He replied that it had created a most unfavourable impression in Government circles. Hardinge thereupon pointed out that Russia at great cost had constructed a series of strategical railways to the frontiers of Afghanistan, which the Russian Government had frequently declared to be outside their sphere of influence, and to the very gates of Herat. Their one object was to facilitate an attack on Afghanistan or India.

It was undoubtedly intended that there should be a perpetual means of exerting pressure on England by military movements on the Afghan frontier and it constituted a standing menace to India.[1]

Against this point of view it is only fair to note that the Russian military authorities believed that, in case of hostilities breaking out between the two empires, the British would incite the Amir to cross the Oxus at the head of the Afghan army and raise the fanatical Moslem inhabitants against their Russian masters. They also held the view, which cannot be gainsaid, that while Great Britain could attack Russia by sea in more than one portion of her empire, her rival's only avenue of attack was that leading across Afghanistan to India.

The Resumption of Anglo-Russian Negotiations, 1905.—Upon the outbreak of war with Japan in 1904, it was agreed that negotiations could not be advantageously continued, but, in 1905, Lansdowne, in reply to a question by Benckendorff, informed him that British policy towards Afghanistan had not changed. He invited Benckendorff, in return for this declaration, to give an assurance that the Russian Government considered that their policy also was unchanged and that they continued to regard Afghanistan as lying wholly outside their sphere of influence. In case of this assurance being given, the change desired by Russia in the *status quo* to arrange for the interchange of communications between the Russian and Afghan officials on non-political questions of a local character would be allowed. Benckendorff assured Lansdowne verbally in March 1905 that the Russian Government also desired that Afghanistan should remain a buffer state.

The Russo-German Treaty of Bjorkoe, 1905.—In July of this year it is to be noted that, persuaded by the Kaiser, the Tsar signed at Bjorkoe a personal treaty of alliance between Russia and Germany, Russia thereby entering the orbit of German diplomacy. This treaty was not ratified by the ministers of either state, but, shortly after signing it, the Kaiser wrote to the Tsar that it was directed against England and that France would be

[1] *Op. cit.* vol. iv, p. 206.

obliged to join it, thus practically converting it into a Pan-European Alliance against England and Japan. His efforts to disrupt the Franco-Russian alliance and the Anglo-French understanding were also unceasing. It thus became clear to Great Britain that continued friction with Russia would only have played into the hands of the strong pro-German party at the Russian Court.

The Anglo-Russian Convention, 1907.—Hostilities between Russia and Japan were officially ended by the Peace Treaty that was signed on August 23, 1905. The defeat of Russia produced a readiness among the statesmen of the Northern Power to effect a settlement with Great Britain in Asia. The Agreement that was ultimately negotiated represented a comprehensive and final effort to deal with Anglo-Russian rivalry in Persia, Afghanistan and Tibet,[1] the underlying idea being to embody in its principles and articles terms that would remove all possible causes of friction in the future. Generally speaking, the British invited concessions in Afghanistan and Tibet, while displaying readiness to make sacrifices in Persia.

The Correspondence between Lord Minto and Lord Morley.—Early in 1907 Morley informed Minto that negotiations for an Anglo-Russian Convention were on foot and sent him an outline. Minto in his reply especially deprecated the concession of direct communication between Russian and Afghan officials. He also wrote: "It seems to me that, in entering into any agreement with Russia affecting Afghanistan, unbeknown to the Amir, we stand to lose a friendship of incalculable value, not only in respect to the defence of India, but as regards a frontier war".[2]

During the course of the negotiations, the former question was dropped, but Morley, although the Foreign Office supported Minto's statesmanlike views, tactlessly decided that "since the Agreement altered nothing in the Treaty of 1905, the Amir should not be consulted, but be merely advised of its terms after signature".

[1] This Agreement forms Appendix E.
[2] *India, Morley and Minto*, by Mary, Countess of Minto, 1934.

The Viceroy informs the Amir.—Upon the conclusion of the Agreement, Minto, in his letter of September 10, informed the Amir that Articles I and II of the Convention reaffirm in the clearest manner respect for the sovereign rights of His Majesty, and the policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of the country; that the Russian Government recognize for the first time in a formal document that Afghanistan lies outside the sphere of Russian influence and engage that all their political relations with Afghanistan shall be conducted through the intermediary of the British Government; that, by Article III, Great Britain concedes to Russia her permission for Russian and Afghan frontier officials, specially appointed, to settle purely local questions; and that, by Article IV, the principle of equal treatment for British and Russian commerce in Afghanistan is laid down.

The Reply of the Amir.—In his reply Habibulla forwarded the views of a Council of State which considered that the Convention destroyed the independence of Afghanistan and possessed no advantage. It also, in their opinion, gave the right to both Powers to construct railways in Afghanistan. The real trouble was, of course, mainly due to Morley's lack of tact in ignoring the Amir. As Minto pointed out, the Amir himself was favourable to the Convention but was not strong enough to override the anti-British party headed by *Sirdar* Nasrulla Khan.

Russia decides that the Adhesion of Afghanistan was not necessary to the Validity of the Treaty.—In the autumn of 1908, Isvolski most fortunately declared that whether the Amir gave his formal adhesion or not, the Russian Government would treat the Convention as a valid instrument. The Amir persisted in his refusal to sign the Convention, which lessened the friendship engendered by his visit to India. It certainly stands to his credit that, in spite of German and Turkish overtures, he remained loyal to his engagements during the World War.

Persia and the Anglo-Russian Agreement.—So far as Persia, whose ruler was not consulted by the two great neighbouring Powers, was concerned, the chief obstacle to a friendly agreement between Great Britain and Russia

was the strategical importance of Seistan. As mentioned in Chapter XXXVI, I had founded the British Consulate in that fertile province in 1899 and in the following year a Russian Consulate was also founded. From the start there was bitter rivalry, more especially on the Russian side, and upon the arrival of Sir Henry McMahon in 1903, to arbitrate between Persia and Afghanistan on the new situation created by the change in the course of the River Helmand, as described in a former chapter, the Russian representative displayed open antagonism to the British arbitrator, whose efforts to ensure a peaceful settlement were, however, ultimately successful. Partly owing to these strenuous intrigues of the Russian Consul against the British arbitrator, the military party in Russia considered that the surrender of Seistan, when the creation of the two spheres of commercial influence were discussed, demanded an important equivalent concession by the British.

In the Convention, as finally agreed upon, Great Britain and Russia bound themselves mutually to respect the integrity and independence of Persia. The two Powers then divided up the country into zones of commercial influence with a large neutral zone which separated the two areas in the south-west. The area assigned to the Northern Power contained the capital and practically all the great cities of Persia together with the largest, most fertile and best-watered areas in the country, while its boundaries marched with Russia on both sides of the Caspian Sea.

Great Britain, on the other hand, was content with a relatively small sphere which consisted mainly of semi-desert areas, and contained only one city of importance in Kerman, the capital of the province of that name. The boundary, however, as drawn, did prevent Russia from marching with the western frontier of Afghanistan; it included Seistan and also the port of Bandar Abbas, thereby preventing the creation by Russia of a harbour giving access to the open waters of the Arabian Sea.

To turn to the neutral zone, which included the very rich Karun Valley and the fertile province of Fars, with

the historical city of Shiraz: the Government of India urged the great importance of placing the head of the Persian Gulf and the lower Karun Valley within the British sphere, realizing that Germany might well peg out claims in it, as indeed she attempted to do. The whole question was, however, hurried through, without giving time for proper discussion, owing to the fact that there were strong pro-German forces, headed by some of the Russian Grand dukes, which were working to wreck the Convention. The enormous developments in oil in this area have alone proved the validity of the Government of India's contention and, as in the case of the Baghdad Railway, and of the status of Kuwait, the results of the Great War were distinctly beneficial to Great Britain.

We now come to the point of view of Persia. No nation, least of all one with such a glorious past as she could claim, likes to be slighted, and Persia felt bitterly on this point. Of even greater practical importance to her statesmen was the fact that the basis of their policy, which was the rivalry between Great Britain and Russia, had now disappeared. They considered — and rightly so in the case of Russia — that the creation of spheres of influence was but a stage on the road to annexation. As a result, Great Britain, who had long been considered to be the trusted friend and protector of Persia, owing to her agreement with Russia, was now held to be her enemy. To conclude this section, I will quote from a Persian poem addressed to Sir Edward Grey:

> Not Persia only feels the Russian squeeze,
> 'Tis felt by Afghans and by Kashgaris!
> " Russia her pact will keep ", you answer me :
> Her records read, and wondrous things you'll see!
> Not I, but human nature, tells you plain
> That pacts weigh naught compared with present gain;
> The more since Russia longs for India still,
> As longs the hawk for partridge o'er the hill;
> Else why did she o'er Persian lands let loose
> Her Cossack hordes to crown her long abuse?

British Relations with Tibet.—In the nineteenth century our relations with Tibet were unsatisfactory,

mainly owing to the zenophobe character of both its rulers and its population. In 1885 Colman Macaulay, Secretary to the Government of Bengal, secured Chinese assent to lead a British Mission to Lhasa. He had, however, failed to secure the consent of the Tibetan Government, and the mission, after being stopped on the frontier, was subsequently withdrawn. Somewhat naturally, considering that the retirement of the mission constituted a proof of weakness, a Tibetan force invaded Sikkim and constructed a fort some eighteen miles inside the boundaries of that state. This position was attacked by the British in 1888 and the Tibetans, who suffered many casualties, were driven out of Sikkim.

In 1890 a Chinese representative met Sir Mortimer Durand on the Sikkim-Tibet frontier to discuss various questions. No progress with these negotiations was effected until the impracticable Chinese official was shown the great pit in which the Tibetans, who had been killed in the attack on their fort in 1888, had been buried. This action rendered the Celestial envoy more reasonable and, as a result, Great Britain and China ultimately signed a Convention, by the terms of which Sikkim was recognized to be a British protectorate, while a Boundary Commission was decided upon. Further negotiations led to a Trade Treaty in 1893, but the Tibetans constructed a fortified wall, which ran across the valley close to the trade-mart at Yatung, in order to prevent traders from penetrating into their country.

Such was the position in 1899 when Lord Curzon, realizing the futility of attempting to deal with the Chinese Amban at Lhasa, attempted to negotiate direct with the Dalai Lama. His letters, despatched through various agents in 1899, 1900 and 1901, were, however, returned without having been opened. The Dalai Lama, alarmed by British attempts to penetrate his sacred homeland, now decided to turn to Russia. His adviser and agent was Dorjieff, a Mongol Buriat by birth and a Russian subject, who had formerly been his tutor. The Dalai Lama accordingly despatched this envoy to Russia in 1901, where he was received by the Tsar. His

mission was hailed with delight by the Russian press, which declared that the Dalai Lama had turned to Russia as being " the only Power able to frustrate the intrigues of Great Britain ". Among the gifts brought back to Lhasa by Dorjieff was a magnificent set of Russian episcopal robes for the Dalai Lama; there was also a consignment of Russian arms and ammunition.

The position for the British, at this juncture, had become serious. Not only had the Dalai Lama rebuffed the advances of the Viceroy, but he had sent a mission to Russia, their rival in Asia, while there were rumours of the conclusion of a secret agreement between Russia and China, which later proved to have been unfounded. However, the result of this mission was to upset the borderland states of Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan.

Immediate action was imperative and, in 1903, Curzon instructed Colonel (later Sir Francis) Younghusband to march into Tibet with an armed escort. The Viceroy's proposal was that he should proceed to Lhasa, but the Cabinet, still involved in the South African War,[1] would only permit him in the first instance to march to Kampa Dzong, situated a few miles across the frontier. Owing to Tibetan obstructiveness there was a delay of five months at this place before instructions were received to march up the Chumbi Valley. This advance was resisted by the badly armed Tibetans, who suffered heavy losses, and the British column, which had been reinforced, finally entered Lhasa.

The Dalai Lama and his staff fled to Urgai in Outer Mongolia, but the Tibetan authorities, impressed by Younghusband's friendly attitude, and influenced by the Amban, by the representative of Nepal and by the ruler of Bhutan, were prepared to negotiate. Under these favourable conditions, in September 1904, a Convention was signed, which included the recognition of the Anglo-Chinese Convention of 1890 while the sites of trade-marts were fixed. An indemnity of 75,000,000 rupees was agreed upon, while the Chumbi Valley was to be temporarily occupied as security. The British Cabinet

[1] Vide *Records and Reactions*, by the Earl of Midleton, p. 199.

reduced the indemnity to one-third, to be paid in three annual instalments. The Chinese Government carried out these payments and the Chumbi Valley was evacuated in 1908. The Cabinet also, remembering the fate of Cavagnari at Kabul, vetoed the establishment of a British Agent at Lhasa.

The Younghusband mission excited unfavourable comment in Russia, but Lansdowne replied to the Russian Ambassador that, for a Power which had encroached in Manchuria, Turkistan and elsewhere, the protest was "beyond measure strange", and that the sole object of British action was to obtain satisfaction for Tibetan affronts.

The Chinese Government, awakened by British activity in Tibet, decided to restore their authority in that country and, in 1906, a Convention was concluded between Great Britain and China, by which the latter Power assumed responsibility for the preservation of the integrity of Tibet.[1]

Such then was the position of affairs when the section of the Convention concerning Tibet was negotiated with Russia. It contained five short articles, which after acknowledging the "special interest of Great Britain in the maintenance of the *status quo* in the external relations of Tibet", bound both Powers not to interfere with its internal affairs; it also bound both Powers to deal with Tibet, through the intermediary of China, except as regards matters arising out of the Lhasa Convention; and finally bound them not to seek for concessions for roads, mines, etc.

Summary.—Looking back, it is clear that the task of Sir Arthur Nicolson was most difficult.[2] There was the soreness due to the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and the suspicions instilled into the Emperor's mind by the intrigues of the Kaiser and the pro-German party.[3] Moreover the question was dealt with at St. Petersburg by an inter-

[1] Gooch and Temperley, *op. cit.* vol. iv, pp. 323-326.
[2] *The Life of Lord Carnock*, by the Hon. Harold Nicolson, p. 254.
[3] In September 1907 Isvolski stated to Sir E. Goschen that it had required all his patience to withstand the constant "hammering" to which he had been subjected from Berlin, where the idea of the Convention had been most distasteful.

departmental Committee instead of by the Foreign Minister. So far as Afghanistan was concerned it transpired during the negotiations that Russia was genuinely afraid that we might use Afghanistan as a spearhead for aggressive action in Central Asia. Evidently her defeat by Japan had upset her balance. However, Nicolson, perhaps our ablest diplomatist, finally carried through the negotiations to a successful issue. A proof of the importance of this Convention may be found in the Kaiser's minute on the despatch which informed him of its conclusion. It ran: "Yes, when taken all round, it is aimed at us". In this view the Kaiser was right, since the Anglo-Russian Convention, in spite of the sinister activities of Russian officials in Persia, who aimed at annexing their sphere of commercial influence, cleared the way for Russia to fight on the side of Great Britain in 1914.

Russo-Afghan Relations up to the Great War.—It is interesting to note the situation on the Russo-Afghan frontier during the years that followed the signature of the Anglo-Russian Convention. Among the questions raised by the Russian authorities were the depredations of locusts, who had no respect for frontiers. In dealing with this pest, they pressed for co-operation between the Russian and Afghan frontier officers. The Amir, however, replied to a letter on this subject from the Government of India that he had not heard of any special depredations by locusts, but that, if such depredations were reported, each country should attack the pest in its own way.

Another subject of complaint was the treatment of Russian trade by the Afghan Government, but it was pointed out by the British that, according to the Russian press, it was prospering and increasing. Moreover, it was added, there was no information tending to show that the Amir accorded it less favourable treatment than that given to Indian commerce.

The question of crimes on the Russo-Afghan frontier was also raised but, in this case, there was no difficulty in demonstrating that their number was insignificant on

the northern frontier in comparison with those on the Indo-Afghan frontier, while there was every reason to believe that the Amir was doing his best to bring the perpetrators to justice and to prevent the commission of such outrages.

The difficult question of irrigation in the case of rivers which flowed from Afghanistan into Russian territory was also brought forward. The answer given was that the Amir had reported a diminution in the precipitation of snow and rain in the Hazarajat and that no new irrigation channels had been dug. Actually, in 1905, both the Hari Rud and the Murghab Valley were carefully examined by a British officer, who noted a decrease of irrigation and cultivation in these Afghan areas. Moreover, it was explained that the custom in Afghanistan gives to owners on the upper reaches of a river a prior claim to the use of its water, and the fact that on the Russo-Afghan frontier there was a special arrangement for the Kushk and Kashan Rivers proved the existence of this custom in the case of Afghan rivers in general.[1]

During the years 1908–1909 some friction was caused by the flight from Afghanistan of thousands of the Jamshidi tribesmen. Some of these immigrants were interned at Samarkand, but others were permitted to remain near the Afghan frontier. Much correspondence ensued and the notable raiders were moved further inland. To conclude this section: upon the whole the situation might be described as not unsatisfactory.

North-West Frontier Troubles.—It was unreasonable to expect that the friendly relations established between the British and the Amir would bring peace to the North-West Frontier, more especially as Nasrulla Khan remained openly hostile to the British. Moreover, it must be remembered that the turbulent, well-armed but poverty-stricken tribesmen to some extent depended for their livelihood on raiding the fertile plains. Consequently

[1] In North-east Persia the Russians took advantage of the weakness of that country to destroy the peasants' crops and thereby reduce the area cultivated. I heard instances of these acts of injustice when travelling in that area just before the last Great War.

these raids continued to cause anxiety, more especially as numbers of modern rifles imported *via* Bandar Abbas were now in the hands of the tribesmen.[1] To give an example: in the summer of 1907 the Zakka Khel Afridis visited Kabul, where Nasrulla Khan " not only increased their allowances, but also afforded them facilities for purchasing large numbers of rifles which had become available from the Persian Gulf source of supply ".[2]

In the autumn of 1907 Minto, who, it must be remembered, was a professional soldier and had served in the Second Afghan War, reported to Morley that the position was becoming intolerable, what with raids on a large scale by Wazirs, and by gangs who were especially sent out to murder the Political Agent at Wana, three of whose predecessors had been murdered in fourteen months. Morley's reply was unsympathetic.

Needless to say, the Zakka Khel raiders grew bolder and actually raided Peshawar city early in 1908 and thus forced the British Government to agree to a punitive expedition. Its sudden despatch surprised the Zakka Khels, who were rapidly brought to their knees after suffering heavy losses. It speaks volumes for the influence of Colonel (later Sir George) Roos-Keppel that although the Khyber Rifles contained a large number of Zakka Khel tribesmen they insisted on accompanying him to fight their relations and destroy their property. Again, when Roos-Keppel went out alone to meet the Zakka Khel peace deputation the first question the Chief asked was: " Sahib, did we put up a good fight? " It is impossible not to admire the martial qualities of these fierce mountaineers.

Minto corresponds with the Amir.—There was every reason to believe that *Sirdar* Nasrulla Khan was fomenting the trouble which again broke out, the offenders on this occasion being the Mohmands. Minto wrote to the Amir in April 1908 recognizing his difficulties and

[1] I had reported the existence of this traffic in 1897 but no immediate steps were taken to cope with it.

[2] Quoted from *The Problem of the North-West Frontier*, by Captain C. Davies, Ph.D., p. 145. I would acknowledge my indebtedness to this valuable work.

urging him to restrain his tribesmen, to which the latter replied that he had ordered his frontier officials to prevent his subjects from helping the Mohmands. There is reason to think that the Amir was doing his best, but no Afghan could resist the excitement of a fight with its chances of securing plunder. Finally, in May, the turbulent Mohmands, who were largely supported by Afghan levies, were attacked and duly punished, thanks in part to the new quick-firing 18-pounder gun.

An Anglo-Afghan Commission.—The best frontier officers deplored these expeditions, which inflicted heavy loss to life and property and left behind an enduring legacy of hate. They realized that the only method was to construct roads and hold strategical centres from which the tribes could be dominated and civilized.

In 1910 an Anglo-Afghan Commission met to settle cases on the Tochi-Khost border. The Afghan representatives refused to take up cases against outlawed subjects of the Indian Government, who were being settled in Afghan territory some fifty miles distant from the frontier, which enabled them to continue their raids. In spite of this failure to deal with the chief cause of unrest, various agreements and reconciliations between frontier tribesmen were effected and, in numerous cases, money compensation was arranged to be paid. Perhaps the most important result was that the British and Afghans worked in perfect harmony.

CHAPTER L

THE TURKO-GERMAN MISSION TO THE AMIR DURING THE GREAT WAR

I will so long as the sublime God-granted Government of Afghanistan remains in security and peace, hereafter continue to abide the same way as I have hitherto been abiding by my friendly treaty and engagements with the illustrious British Government, and will not, please God, as far as lies in my power, give preference to the false ideas of ignorant and short-sighted persons, over the interests and welfare of the affairs of my State.—Letter of the AMIR to the Viceroy, dated March 23, 1915.

At the peace settlement, the most important of the national claims of Germany will be that for a German India.—DOCTOR HANS DELBRÜCK, 1915, in *The Heritage of Bismarck*.

The Amir's Declaration of Neutrality.—Upon the outbreak of the World War the Amir announced the neutrality of Afghanistan in a durbar held at Kabul on August 24, 1914. Again, at another durbar held on October 3, he reaffirmed the policy of neutrality and contradicted wild rumours as to his hostile feelings towards Russia.[1]

The Entry of Turkey into the War, October 1914.—The Ottoman Government, under German instigation, was induced to take naval action against Russia in the Black Sea, which resulted in Russia and Great Britain declaring war on the great Moslem state. Upon the Viceroy informing Habibulla Khan, he replied: "I am sorry that the Ottoman Government has also commenced war with the exalted British Government". For the Amir, the position immediately became one of the greatest difficulty, in view of the existence of a strong pro-Turkish party, headed by Nasrulla Khan, which was supported by the *mullas* and other fanatical elements.

The Letter of the King-Emperor.—In September 1915 the King-Emperor wrote an autograph letter to the Amir.

[1] The late Sir Michael O'Dwyer read this chapter and made helpful suggestions.

In it His Majesty expressed his gratification at the scrupulous and honourable manner in which the Amir had maintained the attitude of strict neutrality as guaranteed by him at the beginning of the war. It pointed out that this attitude was not only in accordance with the Amir's engagements but that, by it, he was serving the best interest of Afghanistan and of Islam.

The *Sarhang* of Dakka, who had been instructed to receive the letter, appeared at Landi Khana with an escort of *Khassadars* who wore new uniforms for the occasion and carried a large standard. The guard of honour, furnished by the Khyber Rifles, consisted of a British officer, two companies of infantry and 100 mounted infantry, and, after the exchange of courtesies, the ceremony of handing over the letter of the King-Emperor took place.

The reply of the Amir, which was written on January 6, 1916, ran as follows: " I am grateful that your Majesty is convinced of the neutrality of the God-granted Government of Afghanistan, for which Your Majesty has expressed your gratification and pleasure to me. In future also, provided that no injury or loss occurs to Afghanistan, the sublime, God-granted Government of Afghanistan will remain neutral and will always view with satisfaction and honour the friendship of Your Majesty's Government."

The Amir's Statement to the British Agent at Kabul.— In January 1916 the Amir stated to the British Agent that he would keep his pledges loyally, that he was upset at what was happening in Persia; that he did not care for Germany, Austria or any other Power, but that he was anxious about Turkey, " who was foolishly taking part in the war and who possesses a great religious attraction on the common mind of the ignorant Moslems of the world in general and on the rude Afghans in particular ". In this statement the Amir evidently spoke with the fullest sincerity. The appearance of German Missions in Persia, who drove out the British and Russian colonies from Central and Southern Persia, upset Habibulla Khan, who was naturally affected by the

position in Persia, but the influence of Turkey on the minds of his subjects was a matter of supreme importance to him.

On the occasion of a durbar being held at Kabul on January 24, 1916, large crowds assembled outside the palace in the expectation that *Jihad* would be proclaimed. Actually the Amir deplored the existing chaos in Persia and, dwelling on the impossibility of forecasting the ultimate outcome of the war, he impressed upon his hearers the absolute necessity for unity and co-operation.

The Dawn of German Influence in the Middle East.—Before dealing with the German Mission to the Amir, which created a crisis of the first magnitude in Afghanistan and was a source of the gravest anxiety in India, I propose to outline the thoroughness with which Germany worked to gain influence in Turkey, Iraq and Persia, alike by political and commercial action.[1]

The Visit of the German Emperor to Constantinople, 1889.—The first visit of the Kaiser to Constantinople initiated the grandiose Pan-German scheme, known in Germany as the Berlin-Byzantium-Baghdad (B.B.B.), while the Kaiser spoke of "a Germanic wedge reaching from Hamburg to the Persian Gulf". The *Deutsche Bank* had already gained control of the railways of European Turkey, while, as far back as 1883, Major (later Field-Marshal) von der Goltz had begun to reorganize the Turkish army and to bring it under German influence.

The Baghdad Railway.—The most important part of the scheme was the construction of a trunk railway across Asia Minor to Baghdad with its terminus at a port in the Persian Gulf. It would be guarded by Turkish troops under German officers and was intended to constitute a serious challenge to British paramountcy in those torrid waters. In 1903 the concession was signed and Turkey guaranteed interest on the cost of construction of the line at a most generous rate.

Attempts to secure a Port at Kuwait.—In 1900 the

[1] I have consulted the excellent article in the *Revue du monde Musulman*, "Les Allemands en Perse", by Georges Ducrocq, vol. liv, 1923. *Vide* also Sykes, *History of Persia* (3rd ed.), vol. ii, pp. 431-456 and 541-545; and *Unter der Glutsonne Irans*, by Oskar Niedermayer.

German Mission, that was making a preliminary inspection of the alignment of the railway, reached Kuwait. Its leader explained to *Shaykh* Mubarik, its ruler, the immense wealth that he would acquire if the terminus of the railway were to be placed in his territory and offered to lease an area of twenty square miles for this purpose. Mubarik, however, in 1899, had signed a secret Agreement with Great Britain by the terms of which he had engaged not to sell or lease land without her consent. The German proposal was consequently refused.

Germany declined to accept this rebuff as final and induced the Turkish Government to despatch a naval expedition to seize Kuwait, but the presence of a British cruiser defeated this scheme. Yet a third attempt was made. Behind Bubian Island, which bounds the bay of Kuwait to the north, are two deep inlets which run north to within some twenty miles of Basra. On one of these, *Khor* Abdulla, it was decided to build the terminus of the railway. Although the territory belonged to Kuwait, Turkish troops were posted on it and, in spite of all remonstrances, were kept there. However, in 1914 an Agreement with Germany was being negotiated by which there would have been two British members on the board of the Baghdad Railway, whose terminus would have been constructed at Basra, while Kuwait was to have been constituted an autonomous enclave. The outbreak of the Great War most fortunately put an end to these negotiations.

German Activities in the Persian Gulf.—The campaign was opened in 1896, when the firm of Wonckhaus established itself at Lingah and began to deal in mother-of-pearl. In the following year I met Dr. Henck, who was founding the German Vice-Consulate at Bushire. Among his successors was Wassmuss, whose efforts at gaining concessions, and in other directions, were invariably foiled by our able Resident, Major (later Sir Percy) Cox. In 1901 the headquarters of the Wonckhaus firm were transferred to Bahrein, and the Sultan, whose claims in the Persian Gulf were most shadowy, was asked to grant Germany a monopoly of the valuable pearl

fisheries. He was proceeding to do this when the British Government intervened and vetoed the scheme.

The next attempt was more serious. The *Shaykh* of Shargah, a Trucial Chief, who was bound by treaty not to enter into an agreement with any other power than Great Britain, granted a concession to work the red oxide deposits on the island of Abu Musa to three Arabs. Wonckhaus acquired the concession, which was thereupon cancelled by the *Shaykh*, who expelled the original concessionaries. This action raised a storm of protest in the Berlin press, but the German case was indefensible and was not followed up.

In 1906 the Hamburg-Amerika Line started a regular monthly service to the Persian Gulf, which speedily competed with the British. In 1907 not only were pilgrims booked free to Jeddah, but cargo was accepted at half the rates charged by the British. The line was evidently heavily subsidized by Germany.

The Potsdam Agreement, 1911.—To turn to Persia: in 1910, at the famous Potsdam meeting between the German and Russian Emperors, Sazonoff agreed to support the Baghdad railway, while Germany in return pledged herself to support Russian interests in Persia.[1] The British objected to Sazonoff giving unlimited support to the Baghdad railway, to which the Russian Foreign Minister replied that this support was only intended to extend from Konia to Baghdad. He was consequently requested to correct his draft by the inclusion of the words "*jusqu'à Baghdad*", but declined to do so. Needless to say, Germany took full advantage of this omission.

To continue this subject: Germany had decided to construct a branch line from the Konia-Baghdad railway at Sadija to the Persian frontier at Khanikin, while Russia intended to secure a concession from the Persian Government for the construction of a line from Tehran to Khanikin. In August 1911 the Potsdam Agreement was signed. Russia thereupon agreed not to oppose the con-

[1] For this section I have consulted vol. x of *Origins of the War*, by G. P. Gooch and H. Temperley.

struction of the Baghdad railway. She also agreed to obtain a concession for a line from Tehran to Khanikin to meet the German line from Sadija to Khanikin as soon as this branch line was constructed. Russia, moreover, agreed that if, two years after the completion of this latter line by Germany, she had not commenced the construction of the Tehran-Khanikin line, the German Government was at liberty to apply for the right to construct it. In the event nothing more was heard of these railway schemes, but Russia's policy, which certainly weakened the *Entente* created by the Anglo-Russian Convention, strengthened the influence of Germany in the Middle East.

Germany gains Influence in Persia.—A definite success of Germany in Persia was the foundation at the capital of a college staffed by German teachers, to which the Persian Government contributed an annual subsidy. The *Deutsche Bank* also opened an office at Tehran with branches at Tabriz and Bushire. Of greater importance was the fact that the German Legation had such close relations with the Persian "democrats"[1] that, upon the crushing of the *Majlis* by the Shah in 1908, many of them settled at Berlin and during the Great War were the chief organizers of the German Mission to Persia and Afghanistan.

In addition to the "democrats", through Turkish influence in Iraq, several *Mujtahids*, or "Doctors of the Sacred Law", were won over to Germany by the statement that the entire nation had been converted to Islam and that the Kaiser had made the pilgrimage to Mecca and was known as *Haji* Wilhelm! Moreover, owing to the Anglo-Russian Convention, the British, and even more so the Russians, were unpopular. Finally, the Swedish officers of the Persian Gendarmerie were bought by Germany.[2]

During the pre-war period German Agents were busy in Persia. Among them Captain Oskar Niedermayer, an artillery officer and a trained geologist,

[1] "Revolutionaries" would be a more correct name to apply to the party.

[2] To quote from Zugmayer's diary: "The gendarmerie is always entirely with us and is paid by Germany".

travelled widely in North-east Persia and was my guest at Meshed during the summer of 1913. Zugmayer, a German scientist, travelling at the same period, penetrated to British Baluchistan. In 1916 he was the leader of the Germans whom I captured at Shiraz.[1]

To conclude this section: does it not constitute a striking example of German *Weltpolitik*? Looking back on that period of tension I recall a Persian proverb: 'History is the mirror of the past and the lesson of the present'. May we learn the lesson!

The Turko-German Mission to Afghanistan.—The originator of this scheme was Enver Pasha. It consisted in a proclamation of *Jihad* at Constantinople and at other Moslem centres. A Mission of Germans and Turks preaching the "Holy War" was to cross Persia to Afghanistan, furnished with credentials from the Caliph, and it was hoped that the appeal of the head of the Moslem religion, strengthened by promises of armed support and of money, would induce the Amir to lead his fanatical subjects to invade India in overwhelming numbers.

Upon the outbreak of the War, Indian seditionists, whose headquarters were in distant areas, such as Har Dyal from California and Barkutulla from Japan, assembled at Berlin, where they were organized into an Indian Political Department under the German Foreign and War Offices. This department was strengthened by the adherence of some leading Persians and of some Europeans, the subjects of neutral states.

German Agents in Persia.—In addition to the Mission to the Amir and supporting it, the plan included the despatch of Agents furnished with arms and gold who, aided by the Swedish officers of the Persian gendarmerie, would drive out the British and Russian subjects and seize the treasuries of the Imperial Bank of Persia and of the Russian *Banque d'Escompte*. These Missions would, moreover, be strengthened by German officers who would enlist and train Persians into a force capable of joining in the invasion of India. It was the scheme of Napoleon[2] revived under considerably more favourable conditions.

[1] Sykes, *op. cit.* vol. ii, p. 475. [2] *Vide* Chapter XXV, p. 377.

The Mission of Wassmuss.—Wassmuss was instructed to return to the area behind Bushire, where he was successful in organizing attacks which necessitated the garrisoning of that port by British troops. He also organized a combination of tribes who invested my force at Shiraz in 1918. He was the only German Agent who was in any way successful.[1]

The Position at Tehran in 1915.—To resume: the German propaganda proclaiming the conversion of their monarch and nation to Islam was supported not only by various religious leaders, but by powerful gangs of robbers, who were especially valuable as messengers. Moreover, the escape of some hundreds of German and Austrian prisoners from Tashkent turned the enemy Legations at Tehran into armed camps. However, in November 1915, the advance of Russian troops in Northern Persia caused the enemy Ministers to flee from Tehran, after a fruitless attempt to persuade the weakling Shah to join them. This failure at the capital reacted on the general situation in Persia, but the German Missions had succeeded in driving the British and Russian subjects out of Central and Southern Persia by the end of 1915.

The Formation of the South Persia Rifles.—In the spring of 1916 I landed at Bandar Abbas with instructions to raise a force for the Persian Government, which was termed the South Persia Rifles.[2] Before long I received numerous petitions from the religious and land-owning classes, followed by deputations begging me to expel the German Missions from Kerman, where their followers had created insecurity for life and property. In May I marched to Kerman, where my small force of Indian troops was welcomed as deliverers. The German Missions fled in small parties, and were captured to the number of some sixty German and Austrian officers. These, together with a dozen Turkish soldiers and a few Afghan deserters from the British army, were handed over to me upon my

[1] In *Wassmuss*, by Christopher Sykes, an interesting account of the inception of the German Mission is given together with a full account of the activities of "the so-called German Lawrence".

[2] Sykes, *op. cit.* vol. ii, p. 452 *et seq.*

arrival at Shiraz in November 1916. In this manner no German supporting Missions were left in Southern Persia. As a result the Amir was encouraged to remain loyal, and German prestige was diminished.

The Failure of von der Goltz, 1916.—The plan of forming a Persian army was a complete failure. Field-Marshal von der Goltz, who was in supreme command of the German and Turkish troops in Iraq and Persia, proceeded to Kermanshah, where a staff of German officers was attempting to organize the recruits who had been enlisted. The Persians disliked his Turkish escort and they still more disliked their German instructors. von der Goltz's summary of the position in February 1916 runs: "Anarchy in Persia; nothing to be done; dust, cupidity and cowardice; vast expenditure and no return".[1] A few days after this report was written, the Russians, encouraged by their splendid feat of arms at Erzerum, swept the Germans out of Persia.

Differences between the Germans and the Turks.—It is noteworthy that the Turks did not see eye to eye with the overbearing Germans. They feared, and with reason, that, in case of victory, Germany would treat Turkey as a conquered country. The Germans, as we have seen, aimed at the invasion of India by winning over Persia and Afghanistan to their side, whereas the Turks under Kazim Bey tried to combine *Jihad* with Panturanian propaganda which included the union of the Turkish tribes of Central Asia under the banner of the Sultan. Actually, the alliance between the two Governments was in no way popular so far as the Turks were concerned.

The Turko-German Mission to Afghanistan, 1916.—The Turko-German Mission to Afghanistan was especially disliked by the Turks. Kazim Bey, who accompanied it with a staff of officers imbued with the idea of the union of Islam, worked on those lines and only on those lines. His incorporation in the Niedermayer Mission was apparently purely nominal. It remains to add that the German Mission was strengthened to some extent by the

[1] Vide *Generalfeldmarschall Colmar Freiherr von der Goltz: Denkwürdigkeiten*, Berlin, 1929.

addition of prisoners of war who had escaped into Persia from Russian Turkistan.

Captain Oskar Niedermayer, the leader of the German Mission to the Amir, experienced considerable trouble with the Turkish authorities at Baghdad, who wished to utilize the services of the Mission against the British in Iraq. They even tried to prevent it from penetrating into Persia. In spite of these difficulties, Niedermayer crossed the border early in 1915, when he was warmly welcomed by the Swedish officers of the Persian gendarmerie.

His party, to which was attached the Turkish Mission under Kazim Beg, included twelve Germans, the Indians Mahendra Pratap and Barkatulla, and some Persian gendarmerie, was about eighty strong. He travelled across Western Persia to Nain to the north-west of Yezd, and then entered the Lut desert and passed through Tabas and Duhuk.

Upon approaching the Afghan frontier he divided up his party into three sections with a view to himself escaping the British and Russian troops that were patrolling the southern and northern sections of the Perso-Afghan boundary respectively. He despatched one party, consisting mainly of sick camels, to the north, a second, composed of camels laden with stones, to the south, to attract the patrols, while he himself moved rapidly due east with lightly laden mules to Yezdan, the last village on the Persian side of the frontier. Successfully avoiding the patrols, he crossed the Afghan frontier and arrived at Herat on August 24, 1915. An independent party, which had reached Kain ahead of Niedermayer under Wagner, was driven off by Russian Cossacks with the loss of their baggage and money.

The Reception at Herat.—At this city the Mission was provided with supplies, but was placed under guard in a garden outside the city and no intercourse with the inhabitants was permitted. During its stay at Herat, tactless criticisms of the Afghan troops and of the Kabul-made rifles by the Germans created an unfavourable impression.

The Arrival at Kabul.—Leaving Herat on September 7 the Germans reached Kabul some twenty days later and were placed under guard in the *Bagh-i-Baber*, outside the city.

The Attitude of the Amir.—The Amir immediately reported the arrival of the mission at Herat to the Viceroy. He stated that he had instructed the Governor to forward it to Kabul, where he would certainly ascertain its intentions. He ended his letter with assurances that its arrival would have no detrimental effect whatever on the neutrality of Afghanistan.

The Turko-German Mission at Kabul.—The Amir kept the German emissaries, who were not allowed to leave the garden for some weeks, waiting for an audience until towards the end of October. In a letter addressed to the German Minister at Tehran, which was intercepted, Niedermayer wrote in November 1915: "We were at last received by the Amir in a friendly manner on October 26. The Amir's explanations did not give us much hope. Please send as soon as possible the Turks for my expedition."

Another letter from Roehr (a member of the mission) ran: "I believe it is quite possible to draw Afghanistan into the war if about one thousand Turks with machine guns and my expedition arrive here. Perhaps we shall find it necessary to begin by organising a *coup d'état*. It is absolutely necessary that gendarmerie should accompany my expedition from Isfahan to the frontier as the roads are held by the enemy." Needless to say, copies of these letters were sent to the Amir and, no doubt, opened his eyes as to the intentions of his German guests. In the summer of 1916 the mission was strengthened by the arrival of the supporting party under von Hentig.

The Dilemma of the Amir.—The position of the Amir in 1915 was most difficult. The declaration of *Jihad* by the Sultan, who was also the Caliph, naturally excited the *Mullas* and the fanatical Afghans, although they were fortunately aware that a *fatwa* of *Jihad* published in Turkey was not binding in Afghanistan, unless it were also proclaimed by its own ruler. Apart from this, the

basis of Afghan policy had been that her two powerful neighbours, Great Britain and Russia, were generally hostile to one another. The chief value of Afghanistan to Great Britain was the fact that it served as a buffer state, and though bound to Great Britain by treaties and obligations, the Amirs could yet, to some extent, play off one powerful neighbour against another. Great Britain and Russia thus entirely occupied the stage, whereas Turkey and Germany, although known in a somewhat vague way, had never had any direct contact with Afghanistan and were far distant countries.

When the World War broke out, Afghanistan was faced with the somewhat alarming fact that Great Britain and Russia were allies. The credit side of this new position of affairs was that the Amir was thereby able to point out to his Councillors who pressed him to declare *Jihad* that it would obviously involve the ruin of Afghanistan.

The Amir's Diplomacy.—The Amir, in view of the strong pressure exercised on him by the pro-Turkish party, headed by Nasrulla Khan and favoured by Inayatulla Khan, played a very difficult hand with consummate skill. He delayed matters by convening an assembly of leading *Mullas* and Chiefs, to whom he expressed his firm determination to maintain neutrality for the reasons given above, and followed this up by engaging in interminable consultations with his advisers. In January 1916 he signed a draft treaty of alliance with Germany in which he demanded the assistance of a strong force and insisted on receiving fantastic sums of gold. To quote Niedermayer: " One day the Amir says he is for us and the next against us ". Twice Niedermayer had decided to leave, but the Amir detained him by giving positive assurances, and again backed out of them. Niedermayer also stated that the Amir was unwilling to let the mission leave in case circumstances should change and Afghanistan should declare war. In this case, as he realized, German officers would be necessary to him. Finally Niedermayer, bitterly disappointed with the Indian seditionists, who invariably failed him when any

action was required, realized that without the arrival in Afghanistan of a powerful Turkish force, there was no hope of winning over the astute Amir. The scheme for a *coup d'état* was considered, but was found to be impracticable.

The Dismissal of the Turko-German Mission.—There is little doubt that the capture of Erzerum by the Russians in March 1916 proved the impossibility of a Turkish division reaching Afghanistan, while the fall of Kut-al-Amara does not appear to have greatly perturbed Afghan opinion. The mission had definitely outstayed its welcome when, in May 1916, it was dismissed by the Amir in the presence of *Sirdars* Nasrulla Khan and Inayatulla Khan. Leaving Kabul on May 22, its members scattered, and, owing to the capture of most of the supporting German parties by my force and the vigilance of the frontier patrols, some of them were taken prisoners. Niedermayer, although wounded by brigands, finally reached Hamadan. His mission was a complete failure, but his courage and initiative, under most difficult conditions, were remarkable.

The Amir's Statement to the British Agent.—On September 6, 1916, the Amir stated to the British agent that he had entirely disapproved of the aims of the German mission and that it had left disappointed. He added that, to his annoyance, Mahendra Pratap, Kazim Beg and Barkatulla had stayed on and that since they were his guests, he had not seen his way to expel them. He solemnly declared on his oath that nothing had shaken, or could shake, his firm determination to keep his covenant of neutrality. Owing to his loyalty, the crisis was thus satisfactorily dealt with.

The Silk Letters Conspiracy.—The ramifications of a wide-spreading conspiracy in which Mahendra Pratap and Barkatulla played important parts and which is generally known as the Silk Letters Conspiracy constitute an interesting episode at this period.

The proclamation of *Jihad* by the Sultan in his position as Caliph at Constantinople was soon known in India and eagerly seized upon by the revolutionary

element.[1] The leading Moslem Theological College is that of Deoband, which is attended by students not only from India but also from the tribal territory and from Afghanistan. The head of the college was *Maulana* Mahmud-al-Hasan, who was a widely respected religious leader. Strenuous efforts were made to secure his support and *Maulvi* Abdul Rahim of Lahore (the Obaydulla of the conspiracy) convinced him that India was *Dar-al-Harb* or a " Country of Disturbance " where Moslem religious rites could not be freely carried out and that consequently *Jihad* was obligatory. It is usual for Moslems at Friday prayers to pray for the ruler. Since the British Government was not a Moslem Power, the custom had arisen in India of praying for the Sultan of Turkey as *Amir-al-Muminim* or " Commander of the Faithful " and it was expected that on this account Mahmud-al-Hasan would proclaim *Jihad*. Contrary to expectation, however, the *Maulana* held that the teaching of the Koran forbade revolution or sedition and that the only course for Indian Moslems was *hijrat* or " migration " from India. He therefore sailed with a number of his followers bound for Mecca, where he intended to join in the *Jihad*. At Mecca, the Turkish Governor, Ghalib Bey, gave a cold welcome to the party. He attempted, but in vain, to induce the *Maulana* to return home and stir up revolt locally. Many of his followers, however, gradually drifted back to India. Among them was Saif-ar-Rahman who, under the adopted name of Muhammad Mian, returned to his home in the Peshawar district bearing a letter from Ghalib Bey, known as the *Ghalibnama*, which incited the tribesmen to invade the Punjab. Visiting Abdul Wahid, known as the *Haji* of Turangzai, at the instigation of Muhammad Mian, this holy firebrand was successful in stirring up the Mohmands to make their first attack on British territory, as mentioned later in this chapter.

The Mujahidin *or " Warriors of the Holy Wars "*.—In

[1] This conspiracy is ably dealt with in the late Sir Michael O'Dwyer's *India a I Knew It*, chs. xii and xiii. I would also thank Mr. J. H. Adam for valuable information on the subject.

1820 a certain *Sayyid* Ahmad Shah of Bareilly, who had adopted the especially fanatical tenets of the Wahabis, founded a colony of *Mujahidin*; for a short period they ruled the Peshawar district, but were driven out by the Pathans. Later, they established themselves in tribal territory where they subsisted on subscriptions secretly collected in India and joined, to some small extent, in raids on British territory. Generally speaking, however, they were only anxious to live at ease on their income.

Indian Students abscond to Afghanistan.—Obaydulla, who had not followed the "migration" to Mecca, influenced some fifteen Indian students, whose oath on the Koran he secured, to "migrate" to Afghanistan, where they would preach *Jihad* and the invasion of India. Changing their names by way of precaution, they crossed the frontier and were welcomed at Asman by the *Mujahidin*. Disappointed by the lack of enthusiasm displayed by these tame "Warriors of the Holy War", the students crossed into Afghanistan and reached Jalalabad, where they were placed under arrest. The authorities then forwarded them to Kabul where, for some time, they remained under guard. Realizing that they were not welcome, they asked for permission to proceed to Turkey, which was refused. They declined to return to India when invited to do so and their position was distinctly unpleasant until, thanks to the representations of Nasrulla Khan, they were set at liberty and were granted a very small daily allowance of money.

The Activities of the Conspirators.—The flight of the students was followed by inquiries which resulted in Obaydulla hastily crossing the frontier. At the same time *Maulvi* Fazal Ilahi with some of his fanatical followers fled to the *Mujahidin*, whom they goaded into displaying genuine activity. Fazal Ilahi insisted on forming a branch colony at Chamarkand in Bajaur, situated close to the Afghan boundary. Punjabi seditionists incited the Bunerwals and the Hindustani fanatics, referred to above, to invade British territory. Later they were partly responsible for the raid of the Mohmands into the Peshawar district.

Maulvi Obaydulla organizes the Plot.—The student-conspirators met Inayatulla Khan who expressed deep sympathy with them, but their activities remained somewhat aimless until *Maulvi* Obaydulla, who arrived at Kabul in August 1915, induced them to co-operate for a common purpose. The plot was designed to unite all the states of Islam, the Turks, the Arabs, the Afghans, the Uzbegs, the Frontier tribes and the Moslems of India in a combined effort to overthrow the British *Raj*. The *Mujahidin* were to raise the fanatical tribesmen and be supported by a general rising of the Moslems of India. It was hoped that the revolutionary Hindus and Sikhs would join the Moslems and that their united forces would sweep the British into the Indian Ocean.

The plot was woven with some skill and emissaries were despatched to Mecca, to Turkey, to Russia, to Japan, to China, and elsewhere, to announce the creation of a Provisional Government of India and of an Army of Allah, with the aged Mahmud-al-Hasan as its Commander-in-Chief. The President was to be Mahendra Pratap, the Prime Minister *Mulla* Barkatulla of Bhopal, while Obaydulla, the moving spirit, was to be Foreign Minister. If the Amir agreed to join in the plot, he would be acknowledged as King of India. It would appear that the Amir was cognizant of the aims of the conspirators, while Nasrulla Khan was heart and soul with them. Indeed, had a Turkish force reached Afghanistan, he would most probably have killed the Amir and, after the proclamation of *Jihad*, would have led his fanatical subjects to the invasion of India.

The Silk Letters.—In July 1916, Obaydulla gave Abdul Hak, the leader of the Indian students, three yellow silk handkerchiefs on which letters were written. His orders were to hand them over to a *Shaykh* at Hyderabad (Sind), who was instructed to convey them in person or by a reliable messenger to their leader, *Maulana* Mahmud-al-Hasan, at Medina.

In due course Abdul Hak, who evidently felt some misgivings, reached the house of a fine old Moslem officer, a *Khan Bahadur* at Multan, whose two sons, much to his

grief, had absconded to Kabul with Abdul Hak, of whom he was, to some degree, in charge. Upon the *Khan Bahadur* asking why he had returned without his young masters, the reply given by Abdul Hak was so unsatisfactory that he was soundly beaten and thereupon gave up the letters. The *Khan Bahadur* handed them to the local authorities, who considered them to be unintelligible, but sent them to O'Dwyer ; the latter realized their great importance and forwarded them to Simla.

The letters described the situation at Kabul and in India, referred to the arrival of the Turko-German mission and its departure, and gave the plan for the formation of the "Army of Allah". The headquarters were to be at Medina with the *Maulana* as Commander-in-Chief, while Obaydulla was to be the General Officer Commanding at Kabul. The absconding students were also given high military rank. To conclude this section: these letters, which were handed over to the Criminal Intelligence Department, revealed a plot with wide ramifications, and by their seizure, it was nipped in the bud. It was, however, no closely organized, dangerous conspiracy, but rather ineffectual plans, which depended entirely on the invasion of India by the Afghans. As it happened, the revolt of the *Sharif* of Mecca against the Turks, in June 1916, divided Islam and wrecked all hopes of combined Moslem action against Great Britain. *Sharif* (afterwards King) Husayn also handed over Mahmud Hasan and other Indian conspirators to the British authorities.

The Letters from the German Emperor to the Princes of India.—It remains to add that, in 1916, I seized at Kerman a number of letters beautifully inscribed on vellum, signed by Bethmann Hollweg and addressed to the reigning Princes of India. Copies of these letters reached Kabul with the Mission and on them the seditionist leaders wrote endorsements. They were duly despatched to Bajaur for transmission to India, but were seized by the vigilant Indian authorities.

The North-West Frontier during the Great War.—By way of conclusion to this chapter, it seems to be desirable

to make a brief reference to some disturbances on the North-West Frontier which, considering the efforts made by enemy agents, were of less importance than might have been expected.

The tribes kept quiet until Turkey joined the enemy, when, excited by the letter written by Ghalib Bey, and by the preaching of the *Haji* of Turangzai in April 1915, the Mohmands raided the Peshawar district in force, but were speedily driven out. At the same time, the Khostwalis raided the Tochi Pass and were only dispersed after serious fighting.

Later in this year, the Swatis attacked a British force at Chakdara, while the Bunerwals, joined by the Hindustani fanatics, attempted to invade British territory. Once again, in spite of the Amir's express prohibition, the Mohmands, in September, raided the Peshawar district and, on this occasion, they burned the Shenkargarh bazaar.

The economic blockade of the offending tribe and military operations forced it to sue for peace and to agree to pay a fine. But a new *lashkar* of 6000 men was again collected, which was dispersed by the terrifying action of the first aeroplane, termed *Malik-ul-Maut* or "Angel of Death" by the tribesmen, and in August 1917 peace was finally re-established.

The Mahsuds.—A still more serious outbreak took place in Waziristan, but here again the appearance of a large force supported by aeroplanes, forced the warlike Mahsuds to sue for peace in August 1917. Thus, after two and a half years, quiet was finally restored to the North-West Frontier. It is noteworthy that the powerful Afridi tribe remained loyal, thanks mainly to the personal influence of Sir George Keppel, that great Warden of the Marches.

Throughout this very critical period, the Amir took a strong stand against the dangerous hostility of Nasrulla Khan, who was supported by the *mullas*. Moreover, he wrote to the Viceroy and advised him not to allow Frontier troubles to become magnified or to punish the recalcitrant tribesmen too severely.

CHAPTER LI

THE ASSASSINATION OF KING HABIBULLA AND THE ACCESSION OF AMANULLA KHAN

O Nation with a sense of honour! O brave army! While my great nation was putting the crown of the Kingdom on my head, I declared to you with a loud voice that the Kingdom of Afghanistan should be internally and externally independent and free, that is to say, that all rights of Government, that are possessed by other independent Powers of the world, should be possessed in their entirety by Afghanistan.—The Proclamation of AMIR AMANULLA KHAN.

The Rise of Nationalism in Afghanistan.—The keynote of recent history in Central Asia and indeed more or less everywhere in Asia may be found in nationalism. The so-called "unchanging East" realized the power and wealth of the West and its impact gradually caused it to awaken. Indeed, the victory of Japan over mighty Russia in 1904, proving that the West was not invincible, came to the East as a revelation. In neighbouring Persia it bore fruit in a revolution which resulted in the abdication of Muhammad Ali Shah, in 1909, but, in conservative Afghanistan with a large primitive population occupying the remote valleys of its gigantic ranges, the movement was slow.

Sirdar Muhammad Tarzi.—The nationalist movement in Afghanistan was initiated by *Sirdar* Muhammad Tarzi, a member of the Kandahar branch of the Muhammadzai. Exiled by Abdur Rahman Khan, he had lived at Damascus where he married a Turkish wife. Upon the accession of Habibulla Khan, he returned to Afghanistan and became the undisputed leader of the advanced party, advocating external independence and internal reform. His influence was great as the father-in-law of Inayatulla and of Amanulla and also as the editor of the

Siraj-ul-Akhbar, in which journal he made constant attacks on Great Britain. Apart from this, the collapse of the Russian Empire seemed to offer the races of Central Asia the prospect of recovering their liberty.

The Amir's Demand for Representation at the Peace Congress.—In the spring of 1916 the Amir put forward a demand that he should send a representative to the Peace Conference. There was no doubt that this demand represented the views of what might be described as those of the party, which was headed by *Sirdars* Nasrulla Khan and Inayatulla Khan.

During the years of the Great War, Afghanistan, as we have seen, had been visited by a Turko-German mission, accompanied by capable Indian seditionists. Moreover, in 1918, with the complete defeat of Turkey by a Christian Power and the occupation by the victors of some of the Holy Places of Islam, fanaticism was aroused together with the bitter feeling that Afghanistan had failed Islam in her hour of need.

Owing to the Amir's inestimable services in maintaining the neutrality of Afghanistan, in the face of hourly danger to himself, its independence should surely have been promptly acknowledged after the Armistice. Had this boon been granted, is it not possible that the proclamation of independence by Habibulla would have restored his lost popularity? Might it not also have saved both countries the *Third Afghan War*?

On February 2, 1919 — more than two months after the Armistice — Habibulla, who clearly realized the tense situation in Afghanistan, again wrote to the Viceroy demanding recognition by the Peace Conference of the "absolute liberty, freedom of action, and perpetual independence" of his kingdom. Before an answer, explaining that the Peace Conference was strictly confined to belligerents but that the interests of Afghanistan would be carefully guarded, reached the Amir, he was dead.

The Assassination of King Habibulla Khan.—The Amir, who remained devoted to sport and especially snipe-shooting, went to Laghman for this purpose accompanied

by an escort under the command of Ahmad Shah Khan of the *Musahiban* family.[1]

In the morning of February 20, 1919, it was discovered that an unknown assassin had entered his tent and had shot him through the ear. As was natural, suspicions were aroused but since the descendants of the *mullas* of this district whom he had executed for a plot would be naturally anxious for vengeance, it may be that one of the number was the assassin.

His Character.—In a previous chapter King Habibulla is described as a patriotic ruler, keen on benefiting Afghanistan. He established a Council of State for tribal affairs and introduced Western medical and surgical methods. He also abolished the slave trade and founded a college conducted on European lines, but suitable to Afghan needs. If, in later years, he spent too much time and money on his pleasures, it is best to remember him as the Amir, who in face of almost overwhelming pressure and, at the constant risk of his life, remained true to his pledge of neutrality, and saved Afghanistan from the horrors of war.

The Accession of Sirdar Nasrulla Khan.—The position on the day of the assassination was that Nasrulla Khan, the *Ulya Hazrat* (mother of Amanulla Khan, the third son), Nadir Khan, the Commander-in-Chief and other members of the powerful *Musahiban* family were either at Jalalabad itself or in the royal camp.

Amanulla Khan was the Governor of Kabul, but

[1] The *Musahiban* family, which now occupies the throne of Afghanistan, is descended from the elder line of *Sirdar* Painda Khan, whose fourth son was Amir Dost Muhammad. At this period it consisted of two brothers, termed "*Musahiban-i-Khas*", or "Personal Equerries", Muhammad Asaf Khan and Muhammad Yusuf Khan, who had followed Yakub Khan to India with their families, who were educated at Dehra Dun. The younger brother married into the Sadozai family, and consequently his son, Muhammad Nadir Khan, who ascended the throne, united the two great Durrani sections. The brothers supported Habibulla Khan in his policy of neutrality during the War and were the chief opponents of Nasrulla Khan and his party.

Ahmad Shah Khan, son of Muhammad Asaf Khan, was, as mentioned above, in command of the guard on the Amir's tent on the night he was murdered and, on this account, the soldiers arrested the members of the family. There was no reason whatever to suppose that he was guilty of the crime.

Muhammad Yusuf Khan had four or more sons who were well educated at Dehra Dun, among them Sulayman Khan, Nadir Khan, who became King, Hashim Khan, who is now Prime Minister and Shah Wali Khan. Their sister, known as the "Hindustani Queen", was a wife of King Habibulla, but only bore him a daughter.

Inayatulla Khan, the eldest son of the late Amir, had left Jalalabad to take over charge of that important post by his father's orders. On the death of the Amir being known he was, however, recalled to Jalalabad.

The succession to the throne lay between Nasrulla Khan, representing the Conservative party, who was strongly supported by the *mullas* and tribes, and one of the sons of the late Amir. Inayatulla, the eldest, aged twenty-one, had no following and, at a Council composed of Inayatulla and the leading officials at Jalalabad, Nasrulla Khan was acclaimed Amir. On February 21, at a public durbar, Inayatulla, other members of the royal family, and the leading officials confirmed Nasrulla Khan's election as Amir. The Viceroy was informed and Nasrulla's accession was reported to be popular with the *mullas* and tribes.

The Accession of Amanulla Khan.—Meanwhile Amanulla, the third son, aged twenty-nine, who held the capital, the treasury, the army headquarters and the arsenal decided to bid for power. While Nasrulla remained inactive at Jalalabad mourning his brother, instead of riding to Kabul as advised, Amanulla outbid his uncle by offering the army 20 rupees a month pay as against 11 rupees. He also vehemently denounced the failure of Nasrulla Khan to investigate and punish the assassin of his father. This energetic action in which the influence of his mother the *Ulya Hazrat*, the chief wife and a member of the Barakzai family, was most valuable, was decisive; the army at Kabul accepted him as Amir, while the troops at Jalalabad not only acclaimed Amanulla as Amir, but arrested the members of the *Musahiban* family. Nasrulla, thereupon, threw up the sponge and on February 27, wrote to Amanulla tendering his submission. He was sent to Kabul as a prisoner. It is significant that in Amanulla's proclamation, part of which serves as a motto to this chapter, the "nation" and the "army" are formally addressed, but not the *mullas*.

The accession of Amanulla was accepted throughout Afghanistan without any serious disturbances taking place. The Governors of all the provinces were replaced

by his partisans, mainly members of the *Musahiban* family, with the sole exception of Kandahar, where the Loinab Khushdil Khan was a half-brother of the *Ulya Hazrat*.

Amanulla Khan informs the Viceroy of his Accession.—On March 3, Amanulla informed the Viceroy of his accession in a letter which contained the following passages:

> Nor let this remain unknown to that friend that our independent and free Government of Afghanistan considers itself ready and prepared, at every time and season, to conclude such agreements and treaties with the mighty Government of England as may be useful and serviceable, in the way of commercial advantages to our Government and yours.

To this the Viceroy cautiously replied:

> From this it seems possible that the commercial requirements of Afghanistan are thought to call for some agreement with the British Government, subsidiary to the treaties and engagements above mentioned.

Nasrulla Khan sentenced as responsible for the Murder.—At a public durbar held on April 13, Nasrulla Khan was declared to be guilty of instigating the murder of the late Amir and was sentenced to imprisonment for life. Colonel Shah Ali Riza was declared to have been the actual assassin and was bayoneted at the conclusion of the durbar.

Nasrulla Khan died shortly afterwards, although his death was not announced until some months later; and Inayatulla, as a possible rival, was kept in prison for a considerable period. The members of the *Musahiban* family were honourably acquitted and restored to favour.

The Result.—The action of Amanulla in condemning his uncle, the champion of the *mullas*, and in reinstating the members of the *Musahiban* family, alienated alike the *mullas* and the army. Discontent spread rapidly, and, on April 25, the *khutba* was not read in the Amir's name at Kandahar.

Amanulla declares Jihad.—Realizing the storm that he had raised, Amanulla decided to unite the nation by a

proclamation of *Jihad*. The date of the durbar, at which Amanulla's actions landed him in almost inextricable difficulties, coincided with the tragedy of the Jhallianwala Bagh at Amritsar (where General Dyer had taken stern action against rebels [1]), and there is every reason to believe that accounts of the serious position in the Punjab encouraged him to take his hazardous resolve. To give typical instances from correspondence that was seized:

> The English are distracted in mind on account of the European War, and have not the strength to attack the Afghans. The people of India too are much dissatisfied with the English on account of their tyranny and oppression. They will never hesitate to raise a revolt, if they can find an opportunity, as their hearts are bleeding at their hands.

The Amir's endorsement ran:

> Seen. You will try your best to keep us informed of affairs of this sort.

And again:

> The Provisional Government has entered into a compact with the invading forces. Hence you should not destroy your real interest by fighting against them, but kill the English in every possible way.

This manifesto, found at Thal, was signed by Obaydulla, Wazir of the Provisional Government of India, who is referred to in the previous chapter. In addition to these main reasons, there is evidence that Amanulla Khan was, to some extent, influenced by Russian advice.

Thus the die was cast, and Amanulla, throwing to the winds the friendship with the British Government on which his grandfather and his father had firmly based their policy, forced an entirely unjustifiable war on the British, a war which was known as the "Third Afghan War".

[1] For the necessity of such action vide *India as I Knew It*, by Sir Michael O'Dwyer, p. 283 *et seq.*

CHAPTER LII

THE THIRD AFGHAN WAR

O my pious, brave nation! O my faithful lion-hearted army! Nobility fame, honour, courage and valour are among your attributes. Patriotism piety and virtue are your natural characteristics.

. . . .

I proclaim to all of you, the truthful subjects of my royal person, that the treacherous and deceitful English Government has been, since a long time, practising with diabolical treachery and fraud, many shameful oppressions on us.

. . . .

I call upon my pious and brave royal army to strive and do their best, and upon all my faithful subjects to wage *Jihad* in the path of God with their life and property.—AMANULLA KHAN'S Proclamation of *Jihad*.

Cardboard brown hills flat against the skyline! Hills that had shape without bulk, and where the rock faces showed, the cardboard was stained and darkened. The first thing I noticed about the Khyber was its lack of detail. . . . Anything that moved on the mountains was without individuality. No wonder aeroplanes are of little use against the invisibility with which the hills protect their own. At five hundred feet, it would be difficult for an observer to pick out as many tribesmen ambushed on an apparently barren summit.—ROSITA FORBES.

The Policy of the Amir.—In the First and Second Afghan Wars, British armies invaded Afghanistan, captured Kabul and held various other important centres. On this occasion the Afghans invaded India, but merely penetrated a few miles into British territory from which they were speedily ejected with heavy losses.

Amanulla's policy was to raise the warlike and fanatical tribes on both sides of the frontier by the declaration of *Jihad* and by the assembling of troops at various points on the Indian frontier who, while avoiding engagements with the British, would foment rebellion on the North-West Frontier and in the Punjab. Acting on this plan, he despatched a force under Saleh Muhammad, who had replaced Nadir Khan as Commander-in-Chief, to Dakka, a second, under Nadir Khan, to Khost, and a third, under Abdul Kuddus, to Kandahar.

Internal Disturbances in India.—In the spring of 1919 serious internal disturbances caused the authorities grave anxiety.[1] So much so was this the case that it was necessary to detain large bodies of troops awaiting demobilization or embarkation to England, to guard important centres and the vital lines of communication. These disturbances had, without doubt, encouraged the Amir to pursue his hostile policy.

The Military Position in India.—The most important factor, in May 1919, was the large number of war-trained units still serving abroad. Moreover, to quote the official account:[2] "demobilization of British personnel had begun and large numbers of men had left for England without being replaced. The shortage of skilled artisans and mechanics in the technical branch was especially marked. The Indian units throughout were temporarily short of effectives . . . and a full complement of Indian officers and men had been permitted to proceed on furlough for the first time since August 1914." To conclude this brief survey: stocks of aeroplanes, railway plant, and military stores, which were only procurable from the United Kingdom, had run down and, owing to shortage of shipping, could not be speedily replaced. Animal transport, especially the supply of mules, had been completely exhausted and ponies, which are greatly inferior, were perforce employed, even in the Field Army. There was also a shortage of camels, partly owing to disease. On the other hand, many miles of roads suitable for mechanized transport had been constructed along the North-West Frontier, while the duplication of the road in the Khaibar, by which there was an upper motor traffic road and a lower one for slow-moving transport, constituted a noteworthy improvement. There were also sufficient supplies of food.

To give some idea of the immensity of the problem, the strength of the British and Indian forces engaged north of the Indus aggregated 340,000 men and 185,000

[1] *India as I Knew It*, by Sir Michael O'Dwyer, ch. xvii.

[2] I have consulted the Official Account of *The Third Afghan War* and would thank the Secretary of State for India for his permission to use some of the excellent sketch maps which it contains.

animals.[1] Fortunately Sir Charles Munro was a most capable Commander-in-Chief.

The Disposition of British Troops.—In accordance with Lord Curzon's scheme of 1899, regular troops were mainly concentrated on the Indian side of the Administrative frontier, while the trans-border tracts were held by irregulars, with the exception of the garrisons of Chitral, of the Malakand and in the Tochi Valley. This system had worked well until 1919, although its risks and drawbacks were obvious.

A striking force, consisting of two divisions and two cavalry brigades, was available for offensive action on the Khaibar front and half that force on the southern front. A defensive rôle was assigned to troops in the Central area and to the garrisons of Malakand and Chitral. A general reserve of one division, two mobile brigades and one brigade of cavalry was kept in readiness. These latter units were short of effectives and of transport. Generally speaking, the force suffered from the drawbacks detailed above, but it had the great advantage of being provided with aeroplanes, although these were few in number and of an inferior class.

The Afghan Military Forces.—In this work I have pointed out more than once that the real military strength of Afghanistan lies in its armed population rather than in its army, but the difficulties of supply strictly limit the numbers of armed tribesmen who can be kept in the field for any long period. Afghanistan, at this time, was divided into ten military districts, all of them, except in the case of Kabul, being in touch with its frontiers. Its effectives were nominally 38,000 infantry, 8000 cavalry and 4000 artillerymen. They were badly trained, with obsolete guns and rifles, although their courage and endurance were beyond dispute.

As shown in the sketch map, number 1, in the Kunar Valley there were 6 battalions of infantry and 8 pack guns available for operations against Chitral. At Ningrahar, available for operations against the Khaibar, there

[1] Vide *The Life of General Sir Charles Carmichael Munro*, by General Sir George Barrow.

were 14 battalions of infantry, 1 battalion of pioneers, 1½ regiments of cavalry and 44 guns. A still stronger force, concentrating in Khost under Nadir Khan, included 16 battalions of infantry, 2 battalions of pioneers, 4 regiments of cavalry and 60 guns. Concentrating at Kandahar were 13 battalions of infantry, 3 regiments of cavalry and 60 guns. Finally, at Kabul, there was a general reserve of 11 battalions of infantry and 5½ regiments of cavalry with 40 guns. The only arsenal, which was scantily supplied with equipment and munitions, was situated close to Kabul.

The First Act of War.—On May 3 an escort of Khyber Rifles which was, as usual, escorting the caravan to the Afghan border, was turned back by Afghan pickets who had established themselves on the British side of the frontier. On the following day large numbers of copies of the *farman*, signed by the Amir and exhorting all Moslems to *Jihad*, were distributed through the Afghan post office at Peshawar, together with leaflets which announced that Germany had resumed military operations and that India had revolted.

The Phases of Operations.—In consequence of the Amir's action, orders were issued on May 5 for the mobilization of the field army. The operations fall under three distinct heads:

Phase (1): Actions on the Khaibar front from May 6 to 25.

Phase (2): Invasion of the Central area by Nadir Khan and the siege of Thal from May 26 to June 2.

Phase (3): From June 3 to August 8 cessation of hostilities by Afghan regulars, but considerable activity of border tribes under the instigation of Afghan leaders. Finally the capture of the Spin-Baldak Fort and operations by the Chitral force deserve mention.

The Operations on the Khaibar Front.—It would appear that Saleh Muhammad, the Afghan Commander-in-Chief, misunderstood or disobeyed the Amir's instructions by commencing hostilities before the hoped for risings in India and among the tribesmen had taken place.[1] Arriv-

[1] He was dismissed and not restored to favour.

ing at Dakka towards the end of April, Afghan regulars crossed the frontier on May 3 and occupied Bagh and the heights above Landi Kotal[1] with a force which, by the evening of May 6, included three battalions of infantry and two guns. A second body of 350 infantry with two guns held two hills situated some five miles to the north of Landi Kotal, while Shinwaris and Mohmands from Afghan territory were gradually assembling and joining the Amir's regular forces in large numbers.

The British Garrison at Landi Kotal.—During this critical period the British garrison at Landi Kotal merely consisted of two companies of Indian infantry and 500 men of the Khyber Rifles. Owing to the cry of *Jihad* and hostile propaganda among the tribes, the loyalty of the latter body could not be depended upon, and it was most fortunate that the Afghans allowed this golden opportunity to slip. Had they overpowered this weak force, the neighbouring tribes would undoubtedly have risen. As it was, rather in accordance with their custom, they watched to see what would happen. The situation was saved by the arrival, on May 7, of British reinforcements in lorries, to be followed by the 1st infantry brigade, which reached Landi Kotal on May 8.

Brigadier-General G. F. Crocker attacks the Afghan Position.—Crocker, expecting the speedy appearance of further reinforcements, decided to attack the Afghans on the morning of May 9. They held a well-defined ridge facing north-east, but parallel to their line of retreat. Realizing the possibility of tribesmen assailing his right flank from the north, he detached a large proportion of his small force to the Ashkhel ridge. In consequence, on attacking the Afghan invaders he was only able to recover the water-supply and to secure a position for a further advance when reinforcements reached the front.

The Attempted Rising in Peshawar City.—The decisive action was, however, delayed by an attempted rising in Peshawar city, which the Afghan Postmaster had organized in co-operation with the Indian Revolutionary Committee. Its purpose was to destroy the mobiliza-

[1] *Vide* Sketch Map of the Khaibar (No. 2) in Official Account.

tion stores, to burn the railway station and the cantonment. This threat was met by the sudden investment of Peshawar city, by the almost simultaneous closing of its gates and by the seizure of the Afghan Postmaster and the revolutionary leaders.

The Capture of the Afghan Position at Bagh.—On May 11 the Afghan position at Bagh was attacked in force. In spite of the great heat, which necessitated resting the troops at intervals, the Afghans were driven into flight with heavy losses, while the Royal Air Force completed the victory by bombing and machine-gunning groups of fugitives. On the following day the Royal Air Force bombed the Afghan camp at Dakka, whereupon the Amir's army hastily retired on Jalalabad, while their Mohmand allies, true to type, looted the camp. Dakka was subsequently occupied without opposition by the British.

Afghan Attack on the Camp at Dakka.—On May 16 a reconnaissance in force passed through the Khurd Khaibar Pass and advanced to the Mohmand village of Girdiz, which was occupied. Large numbers of the enemy, with artillery, who had concentrated for an attack on Dakka, threatened this column, which retired hard pressed back to its camp. Indeed, a charge of the King's Dragoon Guards had to be made before the pursuers were checked.

The Capture of the Afghan Position at the Khurd Khaibar.—The enemy had taken up a strong position in the hills from the Khurd Khaibar westwards, which made the British camp untenable. Relying on promises of reinforcements and a fresh supply of gun ammunition, Crocker attacked at dawn on May 17. Partly owing to the lack of ammunition, the attack was held up, but the opportune arrival of three lorryloads enabled the artillery to become active once again. An hour later, the appearance of British reinforcements under General Sir Andrew Skeen, on the right flank of the Afghans, changed the situation. The main attack had been timed to start at 2 P.M., but the Afghans, owing to the deadly fire of the British howitzers and the threat to

their right flank, began to retire at 1 P.M. and dispersed so rapidly that, although they left five out of their seven Krupp guns behind, their losses were not as heavy as was hoped.

The Afridis display Hostility.—In spite of the British victory of May 11, sections of the Afridis, seduced by Afghan money, raised the cry of *Jihad*. This movement, combined with the open enmity of an influential headman and an attack on a column, affected the loyalty of the Khyber Rifles, who began to desert with their arms and ammunition. The force was consequently disbanded, and the pass was strongly held by British regular troops.

The Bombing of Jalalabad and of Kabul.—To resume the main narrative: the Royal Air Force, although greatly handicapped by the inferior quality of its machines, carried out concentrated bombing raids on Jalalabad, where large portions of the military quarter were burned; troops on parade were also bombed. During the panic which ensued the neighbouring tribesmen looted arms, ammunition and treasure. To quote from an Indian eye-witness: "A few aeroplanes came over Jalalabad and made a bombardment for hours, two bombs exploding near the room I occupied at only a few yards. This bombardment caused a bad confusion and disorder both in the civil and military quarters alike. . . . The *Sipahi* [soldier] wanted to excel his General in flight and the General his *Sipahi*."

To continue: on May 24 Captain R. Halley of the Royal Air Force performed a notable feat in bombing the Amir's palace and the ammunition factory at Kabul. This demonstration that the capital was within reach of British aircraft produced a profound impression and an earnest desire for peace. Again we have the report of an Indian eye-witness: "At 6 A.M. an aeroplane made appearance at Kabul for the first time. . . . Three guns fired from the hills and Ark, numerous rifle fires and a few foolish revolver fires were made by the public and military. There was a great humming sound in the town after the airship had disappeared, denoting public terror

and sensation followed by a death silence after a few minutes. To appease the public from the panic, a band was played and a regiment brought on the parade ground for a few minutes, quite at unusual times."

The Amir's Request for an Armistice.—Preparations for an advance on Jalalabad were being made during this period, but unofficial Afghan overtures culminated on May 31 in a formal request from the Amir for the conclusion of an Armistice. Instructions were consequently issued that, although preparations were to continue, no further advance was to be made without fresh orders. Actually the position in the Central area called for strong reinforcements, which necessitated the transfer of a part of the mechanized transport of the Khaibar force.

The Central Front.—The force which held the Central Area was weak and lacked transport. Consequently it was not intended to assume the offensive. In the Upper Kurram Valley we were bound to defend the loyal Turis against their Afghan enemies, in spite of the disadvantageous fact that the valley formed an extremely narrow salient, with Afghan territory flanking it throughout on the west and to a less extent to the north. The exposed position was Parachinar,[1] where, on May 7, a battalion of infantry, a squadron of cavalry and two sections of mountain guns had been sent to reinforce the Kurram militia. This weak force was later substantially strengthened by the 3rd Guides and a Motor Gun Company.

The Movements of Nadir Khan.—Nadir Khan, whose movements were fortunately deliberate, reached Matun, the chief centre of Khost, on May 19. There he was in a position to march on Thal or on the Tochi, or, again, to sever our communications with Parachinar and establish contact with the Afridis, and it was impossible to know which objective he would select. On May 23 it was reported that he was marching on Spinwam, which was evacuated and was almost immediately occupied by the Afghans. Nadir Khan was now equidistant from Thal,

[1] *Vide* Sketch Map of Central Area (No. 12).

Bannu or Idak on the Tochi. He finally decided to attack Thal and, using a route which had been reported as unfit for the passage of field guns, but which was passable for the elephants and mules which carried them, he appeared before Thal on May 26.

The Evacuation of the Tochi Valley and of Wana.—In view of the intense sensitiveness of the frontier tribes to any appeal from Kabul, it was considered that the Afghan advance would almost certainly result in a rising of the Mahsuds and Wazirs. Consequently, since the despatch of reinforcements was impossible, it was decided, on May 21, to withdraw the loyal elements of the militia without delay. This was a serious decision, since evacuation certainly meant that the surrounding tribes would become hostile and join the enemy. Moreover, in view of the strength of the posts, which could beat off any attack by tribesmen unsupported by artillery, withdrawal at this juncture was to be deprecated.

The Retreat of Major Russell.—Under the leadership of Major Russell, the most difficult evacuation of the posts was successfully carried out by means of forced marches into the Zhob Valley. No halt was made until the post of Mogulkot, forty miles from Wana, was reached. In this post there were only rations for twenty-four hours and, after halting for a day, Major Russell, starting before dawn, made for Mir Ali Khel. Meanwhile large numbers of tribesmen who had assembled, attacked the retreating force, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that Russell was able to press on until met by the Zhob Militia from Mir Ali Khel. Finally Fort Sandeman was reached but, out of a total of eight British officers, four were killed and two were wounded. The losses by death and desertion were very heavy. Sir Charles Munro in his despatch of November 1, 1919, wrote of this retirement: "The exploit stands out as one of the finest recorded in the history of the Indian frontier".

The Position in the Zhob Valley.—This retirement excited the tribesmen, and the Kakars, Mando Khels and Sherannis, who were enlisted in the Zhob Militia, deserted.

During the difficult period that followed, the destruction of a convoy and heavy casualties suffered by a column which marched out to rescue it, have to be recorded. It should be pointed out that these serious reverses were partly due to the officers and men, in some cases, being young and inexperienced in frontier warfare. However, reinforcements from Quetta relieved Fort Sandeman, which had been invested, and by the end of July the tribesmen had been punished and the disturbances caused by the repercussions of the Afghan War were ended.

The Thal Position.—To return to Nadir Khan: the fort at Thal, which was only built for defence against tribesmen armed with rifles, was the centre of the position, with an outer and an inner line of defence. It was garrisoned by four battalions of Indian troops, with two sections of mountain guns and two 3-inch trench howitzers. Its water-supply was obtained from a well situated 300 yards to the north-east of the fort.

The Afghans shell Thal.—The Afghan force consisted of 3000 infantry with two 10-centimetre (3·8 inch) Krupp field howitzers, seven 7·5-centimetre Krupp pack guns and a large force of tribesmen. The fort suffered severely from the fire of the howitzers, which outranged the British artillery and only temporary relief was obtained by two aeroplanes of the Royal Air Force, which bombed the Afghan gun emplacements. On May 28 the howitzers set on fire the petrol dump, the *bhoosa* stacks and the rations, while the wireless station was hit and temporarily put out of action. That morning a force of Afghan regulars, which occupied Thal village, made a half-hearted attack in the direction of the fort, which was repulsed without difficulty.

The Relief of Thal.—Brigadier-General R. H. F. Dyer led the relief force, which concentrated at Togh on May 30. It included four 15-pdrs. The force marched eighteen miles in intense heat and started off again before dawn on June 1 to cover the last nine miles to Thal.

Dyer, in the first place, attacked some 4000 Khostwal and Wazir tribesmen who were holding a deep *nala* to

the south of Thal. His sudden assault and the artillery fire scattered them and the position was taken. The 15-pdr. guns then silenced the Afghan howitzers.

The Defeat of Nadir Khan.—On the following morning, June 2, an attack was launched against the main Afghan position, on the slopes north~~-west of~~ Thal. As it was developing, Dyer received a letter from Nadir Khan stating that he had received the instructions of the Amir to suspend hostilities. He asked for an acknowledgement to the communication. Dyer replied: " My guns will give an immediate reply, and a further reply will be sent by the Divisional Commander, to whom the letter has been forwarded ". It soon became clear that the Afghans were retiring from the position, which was captured without loss. Armoured cars and aeroplanes pursued the defeated army, while the tired infantry was able to rest. The enemy camp was occupied on the following day and preparations were being made for exploiting the victory by a march on Matun, but the signing of the armistice on June 3 officially ended the war. Much credit for the relief of Thal is due to the indomitable Dyer and to his force.

The Tactics of Nadir Khan.—The advance of Nadir Khan on Thal, using a route considered to be impassable for field artillery, was an excellent move, but he failed completely to take advantage of the initiative he had gained. The British force was weak and consisted mainly of young soldiers. No general attack, however, on the vulnerable position was attempted, Nadir Khan allowing his powerful force to remain spectators of his bombardment, although he was surely aware that he must strike quickly before the arrival of British reinforcements. Having, by his march on Thal, prevented a further British advance on Jalalabad, he was content with this success and saved his army from disaster by a timely and rapid retirement. Before quitting this subject, I would mention that the Parachinar force throughout this critical period displayed striking initiative, which was rewarded by success.

The Chitral Front.—The Afghans had a considerable force in the Upper Kunar Valley. The armed forces of

Chitral included 450 rifles of the 1/11 Rajputs, one section of a mountain battery and the Chitral Scouts, 1000 strong, commanded by British officers, and the *Mehtar's* bodyguard. The Afghans invaded Chitral, but were driven out by the defending force, which crossed the frontier in pursuit and captured the village of Birkot. Other minor operations followed in which, generally speaking, the Chitral force more than held its own.

The Southern Front.—The situation on the southern front possessed the advantage that from the Gumal Pass southwards the frontier of the two states marched together and that, with the exception of a portion of the Zhob Valley, there were no tribes in unadministered territory to be considered. The boundary cantonment, as mentioned in Chapter XLVI, was New Chaman, distant some seventy miles from Kandahar, and five miles within Afghan territory was the Afghan fort of Spin Baldak.

At the outbreak of hostilities, the Afghan forces at Kandahar were estimated at 13 battalions, with 3 regiments of cavalry and 60 guns. There were also large forces of fighting tribesmen available. The Quetta-Zhob force consisted of 12 battalions of infantry, 4½ regiments of cavalry with 24 guns and 34 machine-guns. Reports were received of large gatherings of Afghan troops on the Zhob border, who were probably sent there to aid the neighbouring tribes in an attack on Fort Sandeman. Lieutenant-General Wapshare considered that it would be strategically unsound to divide his force by sending reinforcements to the Zhob Valley and that the capture of the Spin-Baldak fort would produce a considerable effect on the tribesmen.

The Storming of the Spin-Baldak Fort.—In pursuance of this plan, on May 29, 1919, cavalry surrounded the fort, followed by two infantry brigades. The artillery consisted of two batteries of 18-pdrs. in one case and of two 4·5-inch and four 5-inch howitzers in the other. After a bombardment which breached the walls in several places, the fort was assaulted by the 1/22 Punjabis and the 4th Gurkha Rifles; the Duke of Wellington's

regiment gallantly captured the ridge and towers before the main defences had been scaled. The Afghans displayed great bravery and were almost all killed or captured. The fall of the fort relieved the situation in Zhob, but the retirement of the remnants of the Wana garrison, referred to above, upset the neighbouring tribesmen and necessitated the despatch of a mobile column to that area.

Summary.—To conclude this brief outline of the Third Afghan War: in spite of the difficulties of the situation, which I have described, India placed 140,000 troops on the North-West Frontier within a fortnight of the commencement of the war. Within eight days of the opening of hostilities, in spite of the extreme heat, the main Afghan Army had been defeated and scattered at a distance of forty-five miles from railhead. Moreover, the rapid advance of the British in force up the Khaibar discouraged the Afridis and Mohmands and averted a long and far more serious campaign. Coming so soon after the close of the titanic conflict of the World War, this relatively insignificant clash of arms with Afghanistan passed almost unnoticed in Great Britain, but yet, taking all the circumstances into account, it represented no mean achievement, and many British and Indian units added to their laurels.

CHAPTER LIII

AFGHANISTAN ACKNOWLEDGED TO BE AN INDEPENDENT STATE

After the breakdown of the Russian Empire in 1917, the sole inducement for Afghanistan to remain within the British orbit was removed (at any rate for the time being) and events were to prove that the sudden cessation of the pressure from the north had made a greater impression on the Afghan mind than the victory of Great Britain.—ARNOLD TOYNBEE, *Survey of International Affairs*, 1920–1923.

Peace Negotiations — the Amir's Letter.—The Afghan forces in every area of hostilities having been defeated, as described in the last chapter, Amanulla perforce decided to make peace. On May 28 a letter was received from the Amir, who ascribed the outbreak of the war to a misunderstanding and stated that Saleh Muhammad's operations were of a purely defensive nature. The Amir further complained of the air bombardments of Kabul and Jalalabad as unjustifiable acts of aggression, but added that he was " nevertheless prepared to be magnanimous " and had issued orders for the cessation of hostilities.

The Armistice Terms.—The Viceroy in his reply refuted the Amir's version of the causes of the war and laid down the terms on which an armistice would be granted. It was decided that the treaty for the restoration of peace should be followed by a probationary period of six months, during which the Amir should show signs of friendship and that, upon the fulfilment of these conditions, a " Treaty of Friendship " would be concluded.

The readiness of the Government of India to accept the Amir's offer was criticized in some quarters, but it was realized that an advance to Kabul would have probably meant the disintegration of Afghanistan, possibly for some years, and the consequent weakening of the

invaluable buffer state between India and Soviet Russia, which she represented. Add to this question of policy the fact that the military operations had already cost over £16,000,000.

The Peace Treaty of Rawalpindi.—The Amir replied, objecting to the terms of the Armistice and pretending to misunderstand their purport, but agreed to send his representatives to India to discuss them.

The Afghan delegates, who possessed plenary powers, came to Rawalpindi with unduly inflated ideas. They expected that, even if they could not secure the old advantages of the subsidy with arrears, they would win something tangible which would permit them to return to Kabul with credit. They adopted at first a distinctly truculent and defiant attitude, refusing even to attend the first meeting unless they were permitted to retain their armed escort, alleging that their honour was involved in its retention. Their bluff was, however, called and they were informed that, unless they did attend as arranged, their train would take them back that night and hostilities would be resumed. Upon receiving this ultimatum, they became somewhat less unreasonable.

The main objects of the delegates were to gain freedom from British control of foreign relations, the avoidance of any loss of territory, the surrender by the British of Waziristan and other tribal areas, and a new subsidy.

In view of these preposterous claims, it was decided to present the Peace Treaty to them as an ultimatum. After long discussions it appeared that the Afghan delegates were prepared to agree, if their independence and the freedom of their foreign relations could be secured. Finally, on August 8, the Treaty of Peace was duly signed and the chief British representative, Sir Hamilton Grant, wrote a letter which acknowledged that "Afghanistan was officially free and independent in its internal and external affairs".[1]

The Release of British Control of the Foreign Relations of Afghanistan.—Grant was severely taken to task in some

[1] This treaty and the letter are given in Appendix F.

quarters for this letter. But it was evidently impossible to continue the old arrangement without making far-reaching changes. The old order had served its purpose well in keeping Russia from annexing Afghanistan, but the Russian Empire had fallen to be succeeded by the chaos of Bolshevism which did not, at the time, appear likely to be permanent. Moreover, atheistical Bolshevism, although it is apparently now moving far away from the ideals of its early days, will never be permanently acceptable to religious Islam. Accordingly, taking the long view that it is in the interest of Afghanistan to be friendly with Great Britain, not only on account of trade relations, but also for securing help in case of invasion from the north, it would appear that the policy was justifiable and sound. At the same time, it was natural that the Peace Treaty should have been badly received by the army, since it conceded to the defeated enemy terms that would have been more suitable if the Afghans had been victorious.

The Afghan View.—As was to be expected, in Afghan eyes the admission of the independence of their country by the British Commission was regarded as a triumph, and Amanulla declared that he had drawn the sword to vindicate the claim of Afghanistan to independence, and had won it. Annual celebrations are held to commemorate Afghan independence, symbolized for some years by a column with a chained lion, representing Great Britain, at its base; and the Afghans — or many of them — firmly believe that they gained it by victory. The Amir thus found his gamble justified and on this note the first chapter towards the restoration of normal relations with Afghanistan may be concluded.

Summary of Events in the Near and Middle East.—Before dealing with the Conference, which was to be held at Mussoorie, it seems desirable to mention events occurring in neighbouring countries which, in no small degree, influenced Indo-Afghan relations. To take the position of Turkey, at the Boulogne Conference held on June 21, 1919, military action by the Greeks in Anatolia was sanctioned. Turkey at this period still maintained

the *Khalifat* (Caliphate) and the action of the allies was bitterly denounced throughout the Moslem world. In India, the *Khalifat* movement gathered force and, in June 1920, developed into *Hijrat*,[1] some 18,000 Indian Moslems emigrating to Afghanistan. At first they were welcomed, but admission was perforce finally refused; and the disillusioned emigrants gradually returned to their homes, where the benevolent Government of India arranged for them to regain their land and houses.

To turn to Russia: the Whites, who were advancing steadily in August 1919, had been defeated by the Bolshevists in April 1920. The Soviet and Ankara Governments had drawn together, while a Soviet Mission had been despatched to Kabul. Again, in Persia, the Anglo-Persian Agreement had been signed on August 9, 1919, but a year later it had not been ratified by the *Majlis*, which finally rejected it.[2] In Iraq there were serious troubles among the tribes, which culminated in the Arab revolt of July 1920. Taken in conjunction with the sinister unrest in Ireland, the situation, so far as Great Britain was concerned, had distinctly deteriorated.

The Situation on the North-West Frontier.—The position on the North-West Frontier after the termination of hostilities caused grave anxiety, since the Wazirs and Mahsuds involved the war-weary British army in yet another campaign of some importance during the autumn and winter of 1919–1920; raids were also frequent along the frontier from Peshawar to Dera Ismail Khan. Stout-hearted Munro, however, recommended the permanent occupation of the Khaibar Pass, with the construction of a railway line to the Afghan frontier. The settlement with the Afridis which included a fine of 50,000 rupees and the return of Government arms and property was announced in November 1919, but raids by irreconcilables continued.

Nadir Khan held a *jirga* at Hada on January 31, 1920, at which he distributed black standards to the Afridis and Mohmands, and warned them to be prepared for

[1] *Hijrat* here signifies quitting a country governed by a ruler who cannot be accepted by Moslems.

[2] Sykes, *op. cit.* (3rd ed.), vol. ii, p. 548.

war. However, in spite of these intrigues, satisfactory progress was made with the Afridis and other warlike tribesmen. In Waziristan, Colonel Shah Daula, an Afghan officer, remained at Wana, but the decision to occupy Razmak and to construct a circular road in that area improved matters. It remains to add that the gradual re-establishment of British authority among the tribes was a severe blow to the Amir, who counted on his influence with them to serve as a diplomatic lever in his negotiations with the British.

The British Conditions of Friendship.—The Amir was asked to prove the sincerity of his intentions by the dismissal of Bolshevist missions and agents. He was also asked to dismiss Obaydulla, Mahendra Pratap, Barkatulla and other Indian seditionists. Friendly relations in connexion with the frontier tribes were also insisted on and, finally, improved treatment of the British Agent at Kabul.

Anglo-Afghan relations after the Treaty of Peace.—There is no doubt that Amanulla and his advisers entirely misunderstood British intentions and, as was only natural under the circumstances, believed that the British expected that the Bolshevists would have been defeated and that Turkey would have been partitioned during the six months probation; and finally that Afghanistan would be forced to accept unpalatable terms or, once again, be invaded. Apart from these ideas, the British attitude was wounding to Afghan pride. Amanulla thereupon decided to secure the support of Russia and of Turkey.

Russo-Afghan Relations.—In June 1919 an Afghan Mission bound for Moscow passed through Tashkent. An invitation was also sent for a Bolshevist envoy to visit Kabul. In response, Bravine, the Bolshevist representative, whom I recollect as a somewhat temperamental secretary of the Russian Consulate-General at Meshed in 1913, reached Kabul in September 1919. By November, in return for an undertaking from Afghanistan to facilitate the despatch of arms and propagandists to the Indian frontier tribes and to India, the Bolshevists made offers which are given below. Bravine was superseded by

Suritz at the end of the year and the negotiations hung fire for the time being.[1]

The Amir's Policy.—Amanulla in this manner flouted the British demand for the exclusion of the Bolshevists. As to the dismissal of the Indian seditionists, friendly Habibulla Khan was not strong enough to take a step, which violated all Moslem ideas of hospitality, whereas Amanulla considered them useful allies to be encouraged. The question of the frontier tribes, which Amanulla rightly held to constitute his ace of spades, was the last question on which he would yield and, somewhat naturally, fearing a new British attack, intense intrigues by Afghan officials with the frontier tribes were the order of the day. Finally, the British Agent at Kabul was practically held a prisoner and was not released from confinement until August 8, while his correspondence was seized.

The Khaibar Demarcation, August–September 1919.—To add fuel to the fire, the undefined frontier, in the vicinity of Landi Khana from Sisobi to Palosi on the Kabul River, was demarcated by Mr. (later Sir John) Maffey, in accordance with the terms of the Peace Treaty. The proceedings were watched by an Afghan representative, whose report formed the subject of a strong protest at the Mussoorie Conference. Before quitting this subject, it is to be noted that, by the terms of Article II of the Treaty of 1921, the Afghan frontier was advanced approximately 700 yards along the main road; the Tor Kham ridge to the south of the road was also restored to Afghanistan.

The Mussoorie Conference, 1920.—The chief British representative at this conference was Mr. (later Sir Henry) Dobbs, while Mahmud Tarzi was the chief representative of Afghanistan. Four meetings were held in the middle of April, but the conference was suspended on account of the three following acts of Afghan aggression. In Baluchistan, at the instigation of Abdul Kuddus, the Governor of Kandahar, a loyal headman in British

[1] Upon his supersession, Bravine became an Afghan subject. He was murdered at Ghazni in January 1921 at Bolshevist instigation, according to general belief.

territory had been abducted by order of the Governor of Spin Baldak; in the Kurram Valley, at the instigation of Nadir Khan, Tandisar, situated on the British side of the Peiwar Kotal, had been occupied by Afghan forces, as had also been the case of Lambarbat in Chitral. After these questions had been satisfactorily disposed of, the conference was resumed early in June.

Mahmud Tarzi now raised the question of the *Khalifat*, of the Turkish Peace terms and of the Holy Places, but was informed that the *Sharif* of Mecca was entirely independent, that the *Khalifat* had nothing to do with the British Empire, and that no modification in the Turkish Peace terms could be made out of regard for Afghan feelings.

As to the agitation among the frontier tribes, Dobbs pointed out that it was due to Afghan support, to Bolshevist intrigues encouraged by Afghanistan, and to Indian revolutionary agitation in tribal country. The Afghans thereupon boldly claimed that the tribes should be handed over to them and a yearly subsidy be paid to Kabul for controlling them! During the Conference, Dobbs, realizing how the world situation had deteriorated, replaced the demand for the dismissal of Bolshevists and Indian seditionists by a request for their control, to prevent them from using Afghanistan as a centre for hostile propaganda against the British. Other subjects to be discussed were the reception of a British Minister at Kabul with consuls at important centres, and the appointment of an Afghan Minister to London with a Consul-General at Calcutta and Consuls at other centres in India.

Both Dobbs and Mahmud Tarzi were in favour of proceeding to conclude a Treaty at Mussoorie, Dobbs being especially influenced by the inopportune arrival at Kabul of Jemal Pasha, a famous Turkish general. He was appointed to reorganize the Afghan army, while his presence was calculated to encourage anti-British activities.[1] It was, however, decided that Dobbs should present an *Aide-Mémoire*,[2] containing a summary of the

[1] He left Kabul in September 1921 and was assassinated at Tiflis in the following year.

[2] *Vide* Appendix C.

intentions and wishes of the British Government to the Afghan delegates at the close of the Conference. Although no striking success could be claimed for this meeting, some obstacles to the restoration of good relations had been removed, and the discussions had ranged over a wide area.

Russian Policy and its Reaction on Feeling in Afghanistan.—At this period Lenin and his chief henchman Trotsky were denouncing Great Britain as their chief enemy. In Central Asia, however, Moslem revolts were suppressed with ferocity and the Amir of Bukhara was driven out and took refuge in Afghanistan. His arrival and that of hundreds of Uzbeg refugees opened the eyes of Amanulla and his people to the real nature of Bolshevist policy and produced a revulsion of feeling in favour of the British and a readiness to negotiate a defensive alliance with them. Accordingly, on October 6, 1920, the Amir addressed the Viceroy and invited "trustworthy representatives, invested with power to conclude a Treaty", to Kabul. Had this invitation been immediately accepted, the situation would have been distinctly more favourable than it was three months later.

The Dobbs Mission to Kabul.—In response to the Amir's invitation, Dobbs proceeded to Kabul, accompanied by a large staff. In January 1921, at the first private meeting between the Amir, Mahmud Tarzi, and Dobbs, a Draft Treaty was produced by the Afghans and rejected by the British representative as being entirely unacceptable. On April 5 an amended Afghan draft, stated by Mahmud Tarzi to be "absolutely final", was also declared by the British envoy to be "wholly unacceptable".

On January 18, at a Conference with Mahmud Tarzi and Nadir Khan, assurances were given that the ratification of the Russo-Afghan Treaty had not yet taken place, and that Jemal Pasha would not be allowed to intrigue with the frontier tribes. Nadir Khan, in return, pressed for some concessions to Afghan pretensions in connexion with the tribes on the British side of the frontier. This was met by Dobbs drafting a clause

which provided for reciprocal information by the two Governments regarding any measures that might appear necessary for the maintenance of order among the tribes on the common frontier. It also proposed periodical meetings between British and Afghan frontier officials.

The Treaties of Afghanistan with Russia, Persia and Turkey.—Arnold Toynbee, in his survey of the position of the Soviet Government after the revolution of 1917, writes that during the first ten years of its existence in its constant efforts to break the cordon of the "Capitalist" phalanx, it turned to the three Middle Eastern countries.[1] He points out that after the Armistice Great Britain caused alarm to these three countries and opened the way for two sets of treaties, the first of which was built up during the year 1921, and the second during the years 1925–1928. In the former year we have the Russo-Afghan Treaty. There were also the Turko-Afghan Treaty and the Perso-Afghan Treaty, thus, since each country had a treaty with Russia, constituting a system of treaties linking Afghanistan, Turkey and Persia with Soviet Russia, and proving clearly that Russia was determined to build up a strong *entente* with these Moslem powers, and to unite them with one another. The community of interests at this period was mainly, it would seem, hostility towards Great Britain.

The Russo-Afghan Treaty, which was ratified by the Amir in August of that year, provided for the reciprocal establishment of Legations and for Russian Consulates to be established at Herat, Maimena, Mazar-i-Sharif, Kandahar and Ghazni. Seven Afghan Consulates were to be established at Petrograd and other centres. Other important clauses included a "yearly free subsidy to the extent of one million gold or silver roubles, in coin or bullion, together with a supply of munitions to be given to Afghanistan; finally, the transfer of the Panjdeh district to Afghanistan, and the construction of a Kushk-Herat-Kandahar-Kabul telegraph line were also promised. It is, however, to be noted that the Russian Minister at Kabul promised not to establish consulates at Ghazni or

[1] Vide *Survey of International Affairs, 1928.*

Kandahar, and the British Envoy was informed of this promise.

The British-Russian Trade Agreement.—The almost simultaneous signing by Sir Robert Horne and M. Krassin on March 16, 1921, of a British-Russian Trade Agreement, which had been negotiated without the knowledge of the Government of India, added considerably to the difficulties of Dobbs, since it would be unreasonable to expect Afghanistan alone to maintain opposition to Russian policy, while such opposition had not been shown by Great Britain.

The Afghan Mission to Europe, 1920–1921.—It seems desirable at this point to refer to the Mission headed by *Sirdar* Muhammad Wali Khan, who conducted conversations in Russia in 1920 preliminary to the negotiation of a Russo-Afghan Treaty. From Moscow the Mission visited Berlin, where arrangements were made for the engagement of German engineers and air personnel. At Rome it was received by the King and the Foreign Minister and an Agreement was signed by Count Sforza for the despatch of a Commercial Mission to Afghanistan and for the initiation of reciprocal diplomatic relations. Lord Curzon protested against the conduct of the Italian Government in concluding this Agreement. A treaty was next signed in Paris providing for the exchange of diplomatic representatives. At Washington, on the other hand, reciprocal diplomatic representation was not agreed to, but the possibility of appointing an American Consul to Kabul was considered.

In August 1921 the Mission reached England, where its members were treated as the guests of His Majesty's Government. Muhammad Wali was the bearer of letters from the Amir to the King-Emperor and from Mahmud Tarzi to the "Foreign Ministry". The Afghan delegates persistently refused to enter into any relations with the India Office, whose desire to facilitate their objects was accordingly frustrated.

On August 14 they were received by Lord Curzon, who, when Muhammad Wali began making a reference to the negotiations pending at Kabul, abruptly terminated

the conversation, declaring that these negotiations had nothing to do with him, but were the sole concern of the Government of India and the India Office. The letter to the Foreign Ministry was then presented but was unopened during the interview; the Amir's letter to the King was also handed over to Curzon.

It was most unfortunate that this Mission was despatched to Europe before the conclusion of the treaty which was being negotiated at Kabul; a different course would have prevented misunderstandings. The instructions received by the Afghan representatives to have no dealings with the India Office were equally unfortunate and placed the Foreign Office in a very difficult position. However, a more courteous and sympathetic attitude by Lord Curzon might well have avoided compromising the sufficiently difficult position at Kabul.

A Suspension of Negotiations.—To return to that city: the suspicious loss of the Mission mailbag of July 30 caused a suspension of negotiations. During this period, on August 28, Mahmud Tarzi had written a note couched in terms of studied rudeness, complaining of the reception accorded to the Afghan Mission in London. This letter he cancelled shortly afterwards, but it supplied proof that the Amir was deeply offended.

Lord Curzon's Note to the Soviet.—At this period, on September 7, 1921, Curzon wrote a note to the Soviet Government protesting strongly against the continuance of hostile activities and stating that the Russian Treaty with Afghanistan was the most serious charge of all that the British Government had to make against the Soviet Government. Assuming that the contents of this note reached Amanulla, it might well have stiffened his attitude towards the British and thereby have added to the difficulties of Dobbs.

Negotiations Resumed.—On November 8 the Amir stated that without large tribal concessions an understanding was impossible. Matters had apparently reached a complete impasse and a date was fixed for the departure of the Mission after a final official meeting.

The Amir signs the Treaty.—However, on November 15, 1921, the Amir, maintaining to the last the "extraordinary fiction" that his Foreign Minister knew nothing of the discussions preliminary to this decision, signed the Treaty.[1] Complimentary messages were then exchanged and, in a friendly communication from the King-Emperor, Amanulla was accorded the style of "Your Majesty".

A Retrospect.—The difficulties of the British Envoy were serious enough owing to the intransigent attitude of the Afghans. But they were materially increased by the signature of the Russo-Afghan Treaty shortly after the commencement of negotiations, by the deterioration of the world situation, by disturbed political conditions in India and by the frigid reception of the Afghan Mission by Lord Curzon. Finally, as we have seen, the Amir arranged with the Russian envoy that Russian consulates should not be founded at Ghazni or Kandahar and, apparently acting on impulse, signed the treaty.

Much credit is due to the ability and patience displayed by Sir Henry Dobbs, and, to close this somewhat depressing account of the negotiations in a lighter vein, I quote the remarks made by Brigadier-General Muspratt, the Military Adviser to the Mission: "The tedium of the negotiations was varied by a succession of ultimatums and last words. More than once the Mission was packing up, but the dove with the olive branch arrived in time. It was a most reliable bird."

[1] *Vide* Appendix H.

CHAPTER LIV

KING AMANULLA INSTITUTES REFORMS

Afghans are never at peace among themselves except when they are at war.—PENNELL.

The Situation in the Near and Middle East.—Before dealing with the situation which confronted Major (later Sir Francis) Humphrys on founding the British Legation at Kabul, a brief reference to external affairs in which Afghanistan was deeply interested is desirable. To commence our survey with Turkey: by the autumn of 1922 the Turks had defeated and driven out the Greeks from Asia Minor. The neutral zone covering the Bosphorus and Dardanelles was threatened, and the French and Italians withdrew from the Asiatic shore, leaving the British unsupported. Hostilities were narrowly averted at Chanak, but a *modus vivendi* was arranged by the conclusion of the Mudania Convention and, in July 1923, a treaty was signed at Lausanne. In October of the same year the Turkish Republic, with Mustafa Kemal as President, was inaugurated and, in the spring of 1924, the Caliphate was abolished, while the *Sheikh-ul-Islam* was excluded from the Council of Ministers; the religious estates and funds were confiscated.

To turn to Russia: on May 3, 1923, a strong British note, protesting against Russian propaganda in Afghanistan and among the frontier tribes, concluded with a demand for the recall of the Russian Minister Raskolnik, who was transferred to another post. To sum up: in the spring of 1924 the general situation showed distinct improvement in the British position in Asia, more especially owing to the abolition of the Caliphate,

which dumbfounded the leaders of the *Khilafat* movement in India.

The Arrival of the First British Minister.—Humphrys, who founded the British Legation at Kabul in March 1922, was a distinguished frontier officer and was also thoroughly conversant with Afghan mentality. It was clear that Russia, by paying a handsome subsidy in money and munitions, occupied a strong position at Kabul, albeit the Amir must have realized that any Russian threat to India could only be made good at the expense of Afghanistan.

As regards the tribes on the Indo-Afghan frontier, the Amir and his advisers naturally disliked British determination to occupy the misnamed "independent" area and they fished continuously in these troubled waters. Needless to say, they particularly disliked the construction of the Khaibar railway. The Soviet Minister thus found numerous agents ready and competent to conduct his sinister intrigues with the Wazirs, Mahsuds and other turbulent tribesmen.

The Amir's Dream of Bukhara.—At the time of the arrival of Humphrys the Amir, who was keenly interested in the rebellion of Bukhara, and hoped to draw advantage from it, had despatched troops under Nadir Khan to the Oxus frontier. He pressed for the public recognition of the independence of Bukhara and Khiva by Great Britain, which was, of course, out of the question. Ultimately the death of Enver Pasha, leader of the Bukharan revolt, who fell into a Russian ambush on August 4, shattered Amanulla's fond hopes of territorial expansion in Central Asia. It remains to add that the ex-Amir of Bukhara, who had taken refuge in Afghanistan in the spring of 1921, decided to live there permanently.

The Expulsion of the Indian Seditionists.—In October 1922, realizing that the Russians were financing the Indian seditionists, the Amir finally expelled Obaydulla, who led one party to Tashkent, while the other under *Kazi* Abdul Wali proceeded to Turkey. This expulsion constituted a real service to the Government of India.

The Amir and British Tribes on the Indo-Afghan

Frontier.—As was to be expected, upon the frustration of the Central Asian dream, the Amir once again turned his attention to the tribes of the Indo-Afghan Frontier. The British policy of an advance on Razmak at this period involved bombing action against hostile tribesmen, who, in consequence, fled to Afghanistan. The Amir strongly protested, more especially when some casualties occurred in Afghan territory. A Court of Inquiry was, however, promptly held, and the British paid an indemnity of 17,000 rupees Kabuli. This settlement was of considerable political value, since it proved the readiness of the British Government to act justly and pay for losses inflicted on Afghans. Generally speaking, however, the complaints made by the Afghan Government were proved to be based on unsubstantial grounds and were mainly an expression of Afghan fears as to " the thinning of the prickly hedge ".

A Crisis in British-Afghan Relations.—Murders of British officers and their wives, abduction cases and raids were, however, numerous at this period and naturally caused grave anxiety. The Afghan Government at first failed to fulfil their promises in seizing the guilty and in other ways, but were finally induced to comply with the reasonable demands of the British Government. This compliance weakened the position of the Amir in Afghanistan, not only as having yielded to British pressure but as having presumably lost their goodwill.

The Arrival of French, German, Italian and Turkish Representatives and Subjects at Kabul.—In 1922 two French archaeologists, Messrs. Foucher and Godard, whose Government had secured the monopoly of excavating ancient ruins, appeared at Kabul and, in due course, commenced their successful labours on the Buddhist remains at Bamian. A Minister founded the French Legation in the autumn of 1923, and three French professors also opened a school. The German colony, which was represented by a *Chargé d'Affaires*, included engineers and doctors. Among them was Oertel, who had been an associate of Wassmuss in Persia. The Italian colony, which included six agricultural experts,

numbered seventy-one. Turkey was represented by Fakhri Pasha, a fanatical Anglophobe. He was accompanied by a staff of instructors whose services were not utilized — much to his disgust.

Afghan Relations with Russia.—The promised subsidy to Afghanistan began to be paid in part, but was kept a good deal in arrears. Munitions were also supplied to some extent, but there was no indication of the promised transfer to Afghanistan of the Panjdeh area, as stipulated in Article IX of the treaty. Moreover, the expulsion by the Amir of the Indian seditionists was much resented by the Russian Minister.

The Internal Position in April 1924.—The Amir had attempted to push through his reforms, some of which were excellent, but all of them were disliked by his fanatical and suspicious subjects. Especially obnoxious was the new Administrative Code, drafted by a Turkish adviser, which the *Mullas* declared to be unlawful. Apart from this, the people resented the appearance of foreign doctors and engineers at Kabul, who were seen strolling aimlessly about the city. Meanwhile the army had been neglected, was unpaid and had deteriorated.

The Khost Rebellion, March 1924–*January* 1925.—A serious revolt, which was symptomatic of Afghan feeling, broke out in the spring of 1924. It grew in strength until, in August, an Afghan force was cut to pieces, and panic-stricken Kabul lay practically undefended. However, Mohmands, Shinwaris, Wazirs and Hazaras were enlisted by lavish expenditure of money, while *Jihad* was declared against the rebels. Finally, in January 1925, the revolt was crushed by the capture of its leader, the "Lame *Mulla*", who with the male members of his family was executed. It would appear that the tribesmen united mainly in opposition to a section in the new Code which deprived the father and husband of his power to treat his daughter and wife as mere chattels.

The Results of the Rebellion.—The cost of the rebellion, which was estimated at approximately £5,000,000 or two years' revenue, was very heavy. It had seriously discredited and discouraged the Afghan army; it had checked

schemes for educational progress and had caused a serious deterioration of administration.

The British had helped Amanulla by the supply, on payment, of Lewis guns, rifles and ammunition, while two aeroplanes which were also supplied did much to restore the *moral* of Kabul and discouraged the rebels. Against this assistance, the appearance in Khost of Abdul Karim, a slave-born son of ex-Amir Yakub Khan as a claimant to the throne, aroused charges of British bad faith, which the suspicious Afghans readily accepted.

The Army.—At this point some brief account of the condition of the army, on which Amanulla mainly depended, may be appropriate. The soldiers were hardly able to feed themselves on the miserable pittance they received, and were very badly equipped. Their position was practically that of menial servants when stationed as guards to Government offices, etc. Their military training was utterly inadequate and medical treatment was lacking. The staff and the senior regimental officers were recruited from among young Afghans who had received a smattering of modern military education, either in Europe or at Kabul, and the older officers bitterly resented being superseded by these inexperienced youths. Generally speaking, except in time of need, the Amir grudged expenditure on his army.

The Piparno Case.—In July 1924 an Italian engineer, Piparno by name, shot dead an Afghan policeman who had been ordered to arrest him upon his refusal to obey a summons from the Police Commandant at Kabul. In January 1925 the case was settled in accordance with Moslem law by the acceptance of a large sum as blood money by the heirs of the deceased Afghan. But the Amir, alarmed by hostile public opinion, was afraid to release Piparno, who was sent back to prison until the rights of the State, as distinguished from those of the relations of the murdered man, were vindicated. In March, Piparno was allowed to escape, but, losing his nerve, gave himself up to the Afghan guards on the Oxus frontier. He was thereupon taken back to Kabul, where he was secretly retried, sentenced and hanged.

This grave miscarriage of justice caused the Italian Government to demand an official expression of regret, including a visit to the Italian Legation of the Afghan Minister for Foreign Affairs, the return of the blood money and an indemnity of £7000. Meanwhile they held up a cargo of munitions on which £25,000 had been paid; they also attached the Afghan Minister's bank balance at Rome, amounting to £15,000. Negotiations proceeded on the lines so familiar to the British, and both the Italian and Afghan Governments were prepared to withdraw their Legations. On August 14, a few hours before the members of the Italian Legation were due to leave Kabul, the Amir intervened and the case was settled by a visit of the Under-Secretary of the Afghan Foreign Office to the Italian Legation to apologize, the dismissal of the Chief of Police and an indemnity of £6000. This unfortunate episode resulted in the departure of most of the Italian subjects from Afghanistan.

The Afghan-German Treaty of 1926.—The German colony in Afghanistan prospered, and schemes for a bank, for an air service with Tashkent and for wireless installations were mooted but failed to materialize. German airmen flew the two aeroplanes mentioned above during the Khost rebellion, but one of them was shot dead by a compatriot in a private quarrel and the other, unable to work with the Russians, who had taken charge of the Afghan Air Force, left the country. In 1924 a school for boys was opened by German teachers.

To continue this account: in November 1925 a German, Dr. Sauer, who was travelling to Kabul on a bicycle, shot an Afghan under circumstances which were not cleared up. He was sentenced to four years' imprisonment, but was pardoned by the Amir. In 1926 a formal treaty was signed between Afghanistan and Germany.

Russian Policy.—At the close of 1924 the creation of the nominally independent nationalist states Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan was viewed with deep suspicion in Afghanistan, where it was considered, rightly perhaps, that it was intended as a step in the

direction of the annexation to the Soviet Union of Afghan Turkistan.

The Urtatagai Incident, 1925.—In December there was a collision between Afghan guards stationed on this island (situated in the Oxus) and some Soviet troops who drove them out and occupied it. For a while there was extreme tension at Kabul, but finally it was realized that the trouble was due to a misunderstanding and the Soviet troops were withdrawn.

The Russo-Afghan Security Pact, 1926.—Partly owing to the above incident, which increased Afghan apprehensions, a "Pact of Neutrality and Non-Aggression" was negotiated between the two countries. This colourless instrument, which was barren of material advantages to Afghanistan, was of little importance and in no way compensated for the blow to Russian prestige of the Urtatagai incident.

A Retrospect.—To conclude: an attempt has been made in this chapter to show how Afghanistan was shaping under new and very difficult conditions. Amanulla's basic ideas were sound and reasonable. He sought association with the more highly civilized Powers of Europe, partly to avoid being a pawn in Anglo-Russian relations, and also with a view to the introduction of western ideas of progress, and the formation of the Afghans into a united nation, but he was quite unable "to hasten slowly". Had Amanulla cherished his army and secured its efficiency and contentment, the situation might well have been more satisfactory.

CHAPTER LV

KING AMANULLA VISITS EUROPE

During our stay in England such favours, acts of kindness, and sincere regards were so profusely shown us by Your Majesties, members of the Royal Family, Your Majesty's Government and the people of England, that they will always remain treasured in our memories.—Message of KING AMANULLA upon leaving England.

The Invitation to King Amanulla.—The first official intimation of King Amanulla's intention to visit Europe *via* India, and to include London among the capitals which he would visit, was conveyed to the Foreign Office by the Afghan Minister in London in September 1927, who also stated that the Amir would leave Kabul on December 7. On October 2 the British *Chargé d'Affaires* at Kabul personally delivered to King Amanulla a cordial invitation from King George to visit London. The Viceroy, Lord Irwin, also invited him to stay at Delhi on his way to Bombay, if that arrangement would be convenient to His Majesty.

The Journey to Bombay.—The Afghan party, which included the Queen, Ghulam Sadik Khan, the officiating Foreign Minister, and many other high officials, were welcomed at Chaman, where Colonel St. John handed His Majesty telegrams of welcome from King George and from the Viceroy. During the passage of the Khojak tunnel, after leaving Chaman in a special train, a member of the Afghan party somewhat unfortunately pulled the communication cord. This resulted in the breakage of couplings, which took some time to repair. Fortunately a strong wind was ventilating the tunnel, but even so, with four engines smoking, it was a disagreeable experience.

At Karachi King Amanulla attended a garden party

where addresses were presented to him. He made a speech dwelling on the friendly relations existing between the Afghan and British Governments and peoples and strongly urged religious and social tolerance, especially warning his Moslem hearers against being led astray by ignorant *Mullas.* This speech was intended to be his " message to the people of India ".

The Visit to Bombay.—At Bombay, where Sir Francis Humphrys met the Amir and took over political charge, Lord Irwin, who had intended to meet His Majesty, was unfortunately unable to do so owing to an attack of malaria. This *contretemps* caused grave suspicions in the mind of the Afghan Foreign Minister, who behaved discourteously in various ways, more especially as regards the question of seating at the banquet.

There was, without doubt, an intrigue on foot among the Afghan Ministers to make the visit a failure. This party had gained an initial success by refusing to accept the Viceroy's invitation to break the journey at Delhi, and wished to pursue their policy still further. However, thanks mainly to the firmness and tact of Humphrys, the plot was foiled. Generally speaking, the Amir was gratified by the warmth of his reception, by the playing of the Afghan National Anthem and by the display of the Afghan flag. He was especially gratified by the participation of troops in his official receptions and by the aerial escort furnished by the Royal Air Force, which not only escorted him from Chaman but flew out to meet the royal train from Karachi, a significant proof of air mobility.

Embarking on the P. & O. *Rajputana*, at Aden the Amir was received by General Stewart and drove through streets lined with troops to the Memorial Hall, where prominent citizens were presented to him. He then inspected the famous tanks.

The Arrival of King Amanulla in Egypt.—The Amir reached Suez on December 26, where he was honoured by a salute of twenty-one guns. He landed at Port Said to be received by a cousin of the King and was welcomed at Cairo by King Fuad himself, driving with him through

crowds whose greeting was most friendly. He attended a State banquet, visited the Pyramids, and Fuad conferred the grand cordon of the Order of Mehemet Ali on him. It was reported that Amanulla asked Fuad whether, in view of the recent war with Great Britain, he would be well received in England. The reply was: " The English are the most generous nation in the whole world and you will be welcomed like a long-lost son ".

King Amanulla visits Italy.—Leaving Egypt, early in January 1928, Amanulla landed at Naples from the s.s. *Italia*, and at Rome was welcomed by the King and Queen while military aeroplanes wheeled over and around the airship *Esperia*. Troops were massed at the station and lined the streets. There was the usual State banquet and the King conferred the Collar of the Annunciation upon his royal visitor. Amanulla also visited the Pope and received the Order of the Golden Spur from His Holiness. He was also well received by the populace.

The Visit to Paris.—The Afghan royal party which had left Nice on January 25 was met in Paris on the following morning by President Doumergue at the railway station, where troops and bands were massed. The President drove with the King, while M. Briand escorted Queen Souriya in the second carriage, to the Foreign Office, where a sumptuous suite of rooms had been arranged for their reception. At the Hôtel-de-Ville the King was presented with the gold medal of the City of Paris. He was also given a rifle, while a dainty clock was offered to the Queen. Of especial interest to the royal visitors was the meeting with one of their sons, a handsome youth of sixteen, who was undergoing an examination before entering St. Cyr.

Queen Souriya on Afghan Women.—The Queen, who, it must be understood, had been educated in Syria, at an interview she granted, stated that she was the first woman to work for the emancipation of women in Afghanistan and that, in spite of fierce opposition from the old-fashioned Moslems, she had founded a school with 800 girls. Under the direction of her mother, they were being trained entirely on European lines.

King Amanulla visits Berlin.—On February 23, for the first time since the revolution, Berlin gave a welcome to royal guests. A deputation met the party on the Swiss frontier and, at Berlin, President Hindenburg, who was dressed in black clothes and wore a silk hat, received King Amanulla. In the subsequent drive through streets lined by the Reichswehr there was an unpleasant incident near the Brandenburg Gate. The former Crown Prince suddenly appeared in his red motor-car to be greeted by cheering, which was immediately countered by hissing. Later, visiting the Tempelhofer Field, the Amir was presented with a Junkers commercial aeroplane. During the visit hopes were expressed by Hindenburg and other officials that Afghanistan would make use of capable German doctors, teachers and engineers. During this visit, Amanulla was much embarrassed by the people shouting, "Long live the Monarchy and down with the Republic!"

King Amanulla reaches England.—On March 13 King Amanulla was greeted at Dover by the Prince of Wales. At Victoria Station he was welcomed by King George, Queen Mary, the Prime Minister and other officials and drove in a State procession to Buckingham Palace. Later, visits were paid to the Cenotaph and to the Unknown Warrior's Grave; at night there was a State banquet.

On the following day the Amir drove to the Guildhall, where he received an address prior to an official luncheon to which 800 guests were invited; and in the evening the Afghan visitors were entertained at a banquet given by His Majesty's Government at the Foreign Office. This concluded the official entertainment and, the following day, the royal party proceeded to Claridge's Hotel.

A full account of the Amir's activities while in England is hardly called for, but, of special importance, a display by the Royal Air Force, a tank demonstration at Lulworth and the inspection of a mechanized force at Tidworth may be mentioned. Visits were also paid to Woolwich Arsenal and to the Royal Military College at Camberley.

At Portsmouth the Amir was conducted over the *Victory* and the *Tiger*. He then embarked on a submarine

which hoisted the Afghan flag, and, with the s.s. *Alresford* conveying Queen Souriya and the suite in her wake, steamed out of the harbour. The submarine then submerged, the movement causing apprehension to Her Majesty, but she was speedily reassured by a message which ran, " I send you my best wishes from under the sea ". The King was then invited to fire two torpedoes at the target ship. He fired and was immensely gratified by the receipt of a signal that both shots were hits. At a later date he visited the Atlantic Fleet and witnessed various demonstrations by destroyers, submarines and aircraft.

Their Majesties were also the guests of the Lord Mayors of Liverpool, Manchester and Sheffield. The speech at Liverpool, it may be noted, contained a Persian couplet, the translation of which ran:

> May the King's body be ever without pain,
> May his sitting ever be upon treasure,
> May the commander of his army ever be glad,
> May his mind be serene and his treasury full!

The tour also included the Royal Observatory at Greenwich and the University of Oxford, where His Majesty, who was praised for his determination to found a University at Kabul, received the degree of D.C.L. He also went to the Royal Geographical Society to receive the Diploma of Honorary Membership of the Society. Nor were sporting events neglected, since their Majesties attended the Grand National Race, the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race and an Association football match.

On April 5 King Amanulla, after enjoying experiences that no Afghan can possibly have equalled, left England to continue his tour. His message to his hosts serves as a motto to this chapter and proves that our Afghan visitors had thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

Summary.—The Afghan King and Queen were deeply impressed by the cordiality of their reception by King George and Queen Mary and this, combined with the magnificent pageantry of the State visit and the conferring upon Amanulla the Collar of the Royal Victorian

Order, dispelled any suspicions that they may have entertained. Moreover, the warm popular welcome that greeted them wherever they went, alike in towns and in the countryside, made the royal guests fully realize the genuine nature of British hospitality. A point that was noted during the visit was Amanulla's indifference towards Moslem circles and institutions in England, where, indeed, he refused to receive an address. Again, the calm efficiency of the police never failed to excite his admiration. Of Windsor Castle he remarked: " It is the perfect abode of mighty Kings who have reigned through the centuries ", and, on driving away from it, he experienced similar feelings to those his father had expressed on leaving India after his visit to Lord Minto. Indeed, a member of his suite with true Oriental hyperbole exclaimed: " No Englishman has the right to go to heaven when he is dead, since he has already enjoyed it on earth! " To conclude these remarks: *The Times* aptly compared the visit to England of Amanulla with that of Peter the Great of Russia.

The Visit to Russia.—On May 4 the Afghan royal party reached Moscow, where they were welcomed by the President, Mikhael Kalinin. They inspected the Kremlin, and there was a gala performance of Eastern music at the State Opera House. They also witnessed a sham battle which embraced all arms of the Russian service. Gifts consisting of two tractors, specimens of peasants' work and an album were presented to them. As may be supposed, the reception of royal visitors by Soviet officials constituted a difficult task and the views of the suite, if not of the King himself, might be summed up in a single word — anticlimax.

The Afghan King in Turkey.—Towards the end of May King Amanulla, who had embarked on a Turkish steamer at Sevastopol, arrived at Constantinople, escorted by Turkish men-of-war and by aeroplanes. Landing at Haidar Pasha, he inspected the Turkish guard of honour and some fifty young Afghan officers who were being trained at the Turkish Military Academy. On arrival at Angora he was welcomed by Mustafa Kemal

Ghazi, and a banquet was given in honour of the royal visitors. At this function their host referred to the common origin of the two peoples, to their successful struggles for independence and he praised the work of social restoration undertaken by King Amanulla. In reply, the royal guest expressed his affection and admiration for Turkey and declared that " our two sister nations have the same policy and the same duties. Afghanistan is ready to perform those duties."

King Amanulla visits Persia.—At Constantinople where, on his return from Angora, he was received with much enthusiasm, Amanulla spent three days in witnessing a regatta, visiting the Military Academy and in sightseeing. He also saluted the troops at a march past. He then proceeded to Persia and, at Tehran, he was warmly welcomed by Shah Riza Pahlavi, who is one of the outstanding figures of this generation. While at this capital, in order to accentuate the new order introduced by the Shah, he personally drove the Queen and her sister into the bazaars.

The End of the Journey.—The long journey was finally ended by Amanulla driving his Rolls Royce *via* Meshed and Kandahar to Kabul, where his return was celebrated by three days' holiday, with general rejoicings and illuminations. Thus ended a seven-months' journey, during which, for the first time, an Afghan King had visited the majority of European countries and also Egypt, Turkey and Persia.

The Second Series of Treaties between the U.S.S.R. and the Middle-Eastern States.—In Chapter LII a summary was given of a first series of treaties forming a network between the U.S.S.R. and the states of the Middle East, who also negotiated treaties with each other.

To continue with the second series in August 1926 a treaty of neutrality and mutual non-aggression between the Soviet Government and Afghanistan was signed at Paghman. In 1928 negotiations for a commercial treaty with Russia was also initiated, but since the Soviet Government denied the permission for the transit of goods imported from a third country over Russian

territory, the negotiations broke down. It is noteworthy that owing to the change in the international situation the influence that Russia had exercised over the Middle Eastern states had waned. In proof of this, whereas the treaties of 1921 were all signed at Moscow, in 1925–1928, only one out of eight instruments was signed at the Russian capital, as against six at either Tehran, Angora or Kabul. Moreover, at this period, Afghanistan, Turkey and Persia were extending their treaty relations, Turkey, for instance, concluding a treaty of neutrality, conciliation and judicial regulation with Italy in 1928. This extension of relations with the West was foreshadowed in the Turko-Afghan Treaty of 1928.

To quote Toynbee: "By 1928 it had come to be realized in the Middle East that the aggressions of the Western Powers, which had evoked the defensive treaties of 1921, was a temporary after-effect of the General War of 1914–1918 . . . and that Western Governments, increasingly sensitive to opinion at home, were showing a correspondingly greater disinclination to act with a high hand." [1]

[1] *Op. cit.* for 1928, p. 366.

CHAPTER LVI

THE TRAGEDY OF KING AMANULLA

Haste is from the Devil.—Persian Saying.

The Five-Day Speech of Amanulla.—Upon his safe return to Kabul from his long journey, King Amanulla delivered a speech which lasted for five days. It contained a full narrative of his tour in Europe, Turkey and Persia, and referred with pride to the treaties which had been signed with many countries; it continued with an account of the impressions he had formed and concluded with a detailed outline of the policy he intended the Afghan nation to adopt. It was, indeed, a Homeric speech, which ended with the King embracing a soldier, an official, a civilian and a student as representatives of his subjects.

The Conflict between the Old Order and the New.—During the long absence of their King the *Mullas* had been busy. The fact that the Queen had appeared unveiled while in Europe and had been photographed was most unfavourably commented on; much fuel was added to the fire when, after her return, she dined unveiled at a banquet. Both the King and Queen, however, encouraged by the success of Mustafa Kemal and of Shah Riza in their reforms, were determined to carry through similar reforms in Afghanistan.

The Protest of the Mullas.—Shortly after his return to Kabul a Deputation of *Mullas* waited on Amanulla to protest against the appearance of the Queen and her ladies in public without veils. The King in his reply pointed out that there was no *purdah* in the villages. The *Mullas* said that poor village women discarded their veils since they must work. Amanulla thereupon replied

that, when the village women wore veils, the Queen would also cover her face in public. The *Mullas* thereupon departed thoroughly disgruntled.

The Formation of a Legislative Assembly, 1928.—In September a *Jirga*, under the instructions of Amanulla, decreed the establishment of the first Afghan Parliament to be elected by the votes of all literate Afghans. It constituted a Legislative Assembly of 150 members selected from the Grand Assembly to sit at Kabul for eight months every year. At its meeting, Queen Souriya was proclaimed Queen and the King's ten-year-old son Heir-Apparent. The length of compulsory service in the army was also increased from two to three years and all exemptions were abolished. Moreover, a national levy of 3 rupees for every male and a month's pay from every official was ordered to cover the purchase of armaments. The question of polygamy was then brought up, and Amanulla declared that it was the chief cause of corruption and that any Government servant who took a second wife would have to tender his resignation. Yet another proposal to fix the age of marriage for girls at 18 years and for youths at 22 years excited such strong opposition that it was withdrawn.

The Scheme for Education.—Amanulla decided that education should be universal and very cheap, while it was to be free for the poor. This measure met with approval, but the training of Afghan girls on European lines was bitterly opposed by the conservative Afghans.

Dress Regulations.—To continue: in November 1928, an order was issued to come into force in March of the following year. By its terms the inhabitants of Kabul, and Afghans visiting the capital, were ordered to wear complete European dress, including hats. The result of this preposterous edict was to create a body of men who set up booths on each high road and let out the necessary clothes to villagers visiting the capital! It is stated that Amanulla personally tore turbans from the heads of citizens who had adopted European clothes but clung to their cherished headgear.

The Outbreak of the Revolt.—Amanulla should have

realized that Mustafa Kemal was not only a victorious general, who was supported by a disciplined, well-paid army, but that Turks and, in a lesser degree, Persians, had been in touch with Europeans for many generations, whereas Afghans living, generally speaking, in isolated valleys in snow-clad ranges or on wide semi-desert plains, had hardly ever met with Europeans, whom their *Mullas* invariably termed *Kafirs* or Infidels.

Indeed, to anyone acquainted with Afghan tribesmen, it was evident that the issue of orders for new unpopular reforms almost weekly, without the loyal support of the army, would soon arouse the spirit of revolt. The first notice of tribal unrest, as it was euphemistically termed, was a rising of the Shinwaris who, living up to their reputation for lawlessness, attacked Jalalabad and burned the hangars of the local aerodrome, together with its contents. Failing to capture the city by blowing up a section of its wall, the rebels cut off its water-supply and closed the Peshawar-Kabul road. So intense was the indignation of the *Mullas* against the abolition of the *purdah* and the education of girls on European lines that they openly denounced Amanulla as a *Kafir*.

The Rise of Habibulla, "*the Child of the Water-Carrier*". —In the district of Kuhistan to the north of Kabul, a brigand, known as *Bacha-i-Sakau* or "*Child of the Water-Carrier*", had gained considerable wealth and had collected a powerful band of robbers by blackmailing caravans moving between the Oxus and Kabul. Realizing the unpopularity which Amanulla had excited, not only by the taxes which he had levied to finance his tour, but also by his reforms, Habibulla, who was perhaps encouraged by a *Mulla's* prophecy that he would be King, gradually conceived the idea of driving out Amanulla and reigning in his stead. Every day the position at Kabul deteriorated. The *Mullas* denounced the King as a madman; tax-collectors who tried to wring fresh taxes from the people were murdered; and there was a general drying up of financial resources, together with an almost complete cessation of trade.

Habibulla attacks Kabul.—Habibulla collected 2000

men and commenced his attack on Kabul by incessant sniping at night with the idea of alarming its citizens. Amanulla had despatched a strong force under Abdul Ali Jan to subdue the Shinwaris, and the capital was weakly held, while the feeling of the city was hostile to its King. News reached Kabul that the royal troops had been defeated by the Shinwaris, whereupon Habibulla increased his sniping which frightened the merchants and shopkeepers, who began to shut their doors and to hide their goods. Amanulla used his artillery without much success against bodies of rebels who made feints outside the walls, and at last, Habibulla, who had been joined by many of the unpaid soldiers, attacked the city in earnest.

The Abdication.—It was in vain that on January 7 Amanulla published a proclamation by the terms of which he cancelled most of his obnoxious reforms. On January 14, realizing that his soldiers had deserted him, "of his own free will", as he declared, Amanulla abdicated in favour of his elder brother, Inayatulla Khan, and escaped by car to Kandahar.

The Abdication of Inayatulla Khan.—The position of Inayatulla was an impossible one. Left in the Citadel, surrounded by a small body of personal servants, he was bombarded by his own artillerymen, who had joined Habibulla. Realizing his helplessness, he opened negotiations with the brigand chief, who requested Sir Francis Humphrys to evacuate King Inayatulla who only ruled for three days. He was indeed fortunate to escape from a very dangerous position, and was taken in a British aeroplane to Peshawar, whence he subsequently rejoined Amanulla at Kandahar.

The Position at the British Legation.—The attack on Kabul by wild Kuhistanis occasioned serious anxiety in India, anxiety which was fully justified. The Legation occupied twenty acres of terraced ground some two miles to the west of Kabul, and consisted of scattered buildings. It was protected merely by a wall of sun-dried bricks. Habibulla had captured two outlying forts of the capital, and his men wished to occupy the Legation as an advan-

tageous position. Humphrys, however, speaking through the closed gates, warned the would-be invaders of the immunity from attack of all foreign Legations. Thanks to his personality and intimate knowledge of the language, he averted this danger, but, throughout this period, the buildings suffered from shell fire while most of the window panes were broken by rifle bullets. The British women were thus living in daily risk of their lives, only one central building being at all safe. However, they bravely carried on.

The Evacuation of Women and Children.—The British Government adopted a policy of the strictest neutrality between the various claimants for the throne, in which category Amanulla was classed. In view of the seriousness of the situation, it was decided to evacuate the British women and children. Fortunately the Kabul landing-ground was available — albeit under fire at times — and the Royal Air Force supplied a Vickers-Victoria machine which was specially constructed for the transport of troops, together with escorting aeroplanes. After carrying the British to safety, members of the foreign colony were evacuated; the Russian colony also proceeded to Tashkent by air. It is to the credit of Habibulla, who wished to stand well with the British, that, on more than one occasion, his men guarded the aerodrome, while the Vickers-Victoria was loading up and carrying off the refugees.

"*The Child of the Water-Carrier*" *proclaims himself Amir.*—Habibulla entered Kabul as a victor with his following of bandits. Reaching the Citadel within a few minutes of the departure of Inayatulla, he issued a formal notice of his assumption of sovereignty under the title of Amir Habibulla, *Ghdzi* and demanded written guarantees of allegiance from the citizens.

The Position of Habibulla.—The Brigand-Chief held Kabul and the surrounding country but, apart from the forces of Amanulla at Kandahar, there was every likelihood of his rule being disputed. To begin with, he was of mean birth and a *Tajik* peasant. Again, the powerful Afghan merchants of Peshawar, who realized that they

would b ruined under the new régime, were equally anxious to end it and, considering Amanulla unacceptable to the nation, initiated a search for a leader, who would overthrow Habibulla. Meanwhile the new Amir was attempting without much success to form an administration. He had found the treasury empty and immediately resorted to "squeezing" wealthy merchants to secure funds, with which to pay his supporters. Supplies were very scarce in the city, since there was no confidence as to payment being made under the reign of terror which was inaugurated.

The Proclamation of the New Amir.—One of Habibulla's earliest acts consisted of the issue of a proclamation signed by eighty religious leaders and officials declaring that Amanulla's heresies and the obnoxious innovations which he had introduced justified his dismissal. The proclamation announced that arrears of revenue would be written off, that conscription would be abolished, as well as all taxes that were additional to the lawful revenue. The new schools were also abolished. The proclamation then attacked the abandonment of Islamic clothing, especially the turban, the unveiling of women, the education of girls and the ex-King's objection to growing beards and clipping the middle portion of the moustache which was the practice of the Prophet Muhammad.

Amanulla hoists the Royal Standard at Kandahar, January 1929.—At this juncture Amanulla, owing to the influence of his mother, gained support from the Durrani tribesmen, and, once again, proclaimed himself King. But the Ghilzais who could put 200,000 men into the field held the Ghazni area and were, generally speaking, hostile to their hereditary enemies the Durranis. They also hoped to secure independence. Again, the Afghans admire valour and, apart from the unpopularity gained by his reforms, the feeling grew that Amanulla, who had abdicated and fled, was not brave enough to lead Afghans successfully against the usurper.

The Evacuation of the British Legation, February 1929. —In view of the fact that Habibulla only controlled the

capital and its vicinity and that conditions in Afghanistan were chaotic, it was decided to withdraw the British Minister and his staff. The last to leave was the gallant Humphrys, who bore with him the British flag which he had kept flying with such courage. The King heartily congratulated Humphrys on his safe return. His Majesty also congratulated the Royal Air Force on the great feat which it had performed. In eighty-two flights, carried out with consummate skill over snow-clad ranges, in the depth of winter, and in a country practically devoid of landing grounds, British flying officers had evacuated 580 passengers of many nationalities without a single casualty.

The Last Attempt of Amanulla.—In the early spring of 1929 Amanulla, who, as mentioned above, had won the support of the Durrani tribe, despatched an advance guard 1000 strong to Kalat-i-Ghilzai. Early in April his main body, 4000 strong, which included regular troops, was reported to have reached Shah Jui, situated between Kalat-i-Ghilzai and Ghazni. According to fairly reliable statements the royal troops, supported by a large contingent of Wardaks, had inflicted considerable losses on the opposing Sulayman Khel section of the Ghilzai tribe and were about to enter Ghazni. However, fear of treachery by members of his staff, who were alleged to be plotting to lure their master into Ghazni and then to leave him to the tender mercies of *Bacha Sokau*, caused Amanulla to throw up the sponge. Whatever the facts may have been, he retired to Kalat-i-Ghilzai preparatory to fleeing the country. Reaching the outskirts of Kandahar in the small hours of the morning, where he was joined by the Queen and Inayatulla, and travelling rapidly, the party, numbering seventy persons, arrived at Chaman at noon on May 23.

Amanulla leaves India.—A special train was speedily provided for the Afghan refugees and Bombay was reached on May 27. There Amanulla, who had received a gracious message from the Viceroy while on the journey, remained some weeks for urgent domestic reasons. Meanwhile, the task of disposing of the various members of the

party was a delicate one, but was carried through successfully. There were difficulties raised in the case of Inayatulla, but Persian *visas* were finally secured for him and his party, which proceeded up the Persian Gulf bound for Tehran, while the other *Sirdars* went in different directions. Finally, on June 22, 1929, the ex-King and his reduced party sailed for Europe.

Summary.—It is not difficult to analyse the causes of King Amanulla's failure. He must have been badly served by his ministers, but, even so, to force schemes of reform on conservative tribesmen without the support of a well-disciplined and well-paid army made disaster certain, not only for himself but for Afghanistan. While reigning he showed no fear in mixing with the wild, treacherous tribesmen, but, as a leader in the field, he lacked coolness and decision. He had certainly not inherited the staunchness of his grandfather and father. At the bar of history he stands condemned for having brought upon Afghanistan the scourge of the "Water-Carrier's Son". Yet, in his defence, it may be pleaded that many of the reforms for which he lost his throne were desirable and will in the future gradually be carried out.

CHAPTER LVII

NADIR KHAN OVERTHROWS THE BRIGAND HABIBULLA AND IS ELECTED KING OF AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan affords an interesting contrast between the extremes of feudalism and democracy as represented by the tribesmen and townsfolk. The Government is an autocracy vested in the hands of one family. It is beneficent so far as the country is concerned, but ruthless with regard to its political opponents. And there is a gap of a thousand years between the point of view of the officials, many of them young intellectuals educated abroad, responsible for the modernisation of the cities, and that of the tent-dwelling nomads, unchanged since the days of Alexander or Genghiz Khan.—ROSITA FORBES.

Ali Ahmad Jan and Jalalabad.—In the last chapter the flight of Amanulla, that of his brother Inayatulla and the occupation of Kabul by Habibulla, "the Son of the Water-Carrier", have been described.

Two days later Ali Ahmad Jan, the brother of *Uliya Hazrat*, who had been in command of a force that had been despatched to quell the rebellion of the Shinwaris, proclaimed himself Amir of the Eastern Province but, early in February 1929, his force was attacked and defeated at Jagdalak by these tribesmen and the Khugianis. So complete was the defeat that Ali Ahmad Jan became a refugee, and, arriving at Peshawar at the end of the month, proceeded to join Amanulla at Kandahar. Jalalabad, meanwhile, had been looted by the tribesmen and the explosion of a magazine added materially to the destruction of this ill-starred city.

The Success of Habibulla.—We now turn to the usurper, who, having secured funds from the wealthier inhabitants by means of cruel tortures, recruited some ten thousand men, mainly from his native Kuhistan. With this force he was able to deal with the Hazaras to the south-west, who were always hostile to him, and to defeat the Tagavis to the south with heavy losses.

Nadir Khan appears in Afghanistan.—Nadir Khan, the future King, was recovering from an attack of pleurisy at Nice when he heard of the capture of Kabul by the brigand *Bacha-i-Sakau*. Carried on board the P. & O. steamer on a stretcher, he reached Peshawar on February 28. He decided to proceed to Khost, where he had commanded the force which, as we know, had besieged Thal. Two of his brothers accompanied him, while a third, Muhammad Hashim, proceeded to the vicinity of Jalalabad to raise the tribes in that neighbourhood.

The General Position.—Nadir's reception in Khost was most disappointing, owing to tribal jealousies. Accordingly, he travelled to the outskirts of Gardez, where he opened negotiations with the Ghilzais, the Mangals and the Jajis. The general feeling among the fighting races was anger that a despised *Tajik*, or peasant, should usurp the throne. On the other hand the tribesmen much enjoyed looting and reviving ancient feuds. Treachery was everywhere, and Ghaus-ud-din, the Chief of the Ahmadzai Ghilzais, who had declared himself Amir of Ghazni, was playing a double game. By the flight of Amanulla the contest had become a straight fight between Habibulla and Nadir Khan. Habibulla, who occupied a central position with all its advantages, could rely mainly upon the districts to the north of Kabul; he was also supported by the tribesmen of Khost and by various sections of the other tribes, many of whom had, however, joined Nadir.

The Hazaras, as adherents of Amanulla, were always hostile to him. In the northern provinces Gholam Nabi Khan, a son of Ghulam Haidar, Cherkhi, the Commander-in-Chief of Amir Abdur Rahman and "The Red Chief" of Kipling,[1] who was a supporter of Amanulla, had crossed the Oxus, and with a force of Turkoman and Uzbegs, which he had raised in Russian territory, had captured Mazar-i-Sharif; he had also engaged a force of Habibulla's adherents near Tashkurgan. However, upon hearing of Amanulla's flight, he had retired across the Oxus.

[1] "Ballad of the King's Jest."

The Defeats of Nadir Khan.—Nadir Khan, at first, had no luck. He engaged the Kabul forces at Baraki, but was defeated by the treachery of Ghaus-ud-din, who attacked his rear and compelled him to retire to the Mongol country. Patiently reorganizing his force, he failed to hold Gardez, which was captured on June 26. Again, on July 10, his second offensive in the Logar Valley was defeated.

At this period Habibulla felt strong enough to despatch troops who occupied Kandahar. The irrepressible Ali Ahmad Jan, who had hoisted his flag in that city on the flight of Amanulla, was seized and taken prisoner to Kabul. There savage Habibulla nailed his arms and feet to the ground and then drove a nail through his head from temple to temple.

The Propaganda of Nadir Khan.—Many men would have thrown up the sponge at these repeated reverses, but Nadir, in spite of his bad health, remained undismayed. He knew his fellow-countrymen. In July he was able to publish a weekly paper aptly named *Islah*, or " Peace ", with the result that his appeals gradually produced their effect on the Kabul Khel Wazirs, and these doughty fighters of the North-West Frontier decided to send a *lashkar* to his aid, as did also the Mohmands.

The Third Offensive.—Late in August 1929 Nadir Khan launched his third offensive and, on the 29th, captured Gardez, taking 600 prisoners and a quantity of arms and ammunition. This constituted his first important success. Almost simultaneously the Hazaras defeated Habibulla in two engagements at Sirchashma, situated only thirty miles north of Kabul, while it was reported that the Bandit Amir was making axes for his troops, a significant proof of a shortage of rifles.

The Defeat of Hashim Khan.—The usurper, however, was not yet beaten, and, in September, he despatched a column of 2000 men with guns which defeated Hashim Khan, who took refuge at Parachinar in the Kurram Valley. An attempt made by the Kabul usurper to disarm the tribes excited intense hostility, which spread far and wide, while, about this period Durrani tribesmen occupied

Kandahar city without encountering much opposition, but did not capture the citadel.

The Final Offensive.—On September 18 the Wazir *lashkar*, which played the leading part in the third act of the drama, joined Nadir Khan's forces at Ali Khel and, marching on Kabul through the Logar Valley, reached the historical battlefield of Charasia on October 6. There the final battle was fought. Habibulla's troops were entrenched in this very strong position but, deceived by a feigned flight of the attackers, they left their trenches and pursued them. The Wazirs, delighted at the success of their ruse, suddenly turned round and, carrying all before them, captured the position and drove the enemy into headlong flight. At this juncture *Sirdar* Shahwali, who was in command, received reinforcements, and, on October 10, Kabul city was captured. Three days later, after a bombardment, the citadel was also taken.

Nadir Khan proclaimed King.—Nadir Khan entered Kabul as a victor. He was received with enthusiasm and was urged to accept the sovereignty, but at first declined to do so. In the event, the cry of the tribesmen that they would immediately disperse to their homes if h persisted in his refusal turned the scales. In this manner Nadir Khan ascended the throne of Afghanistan.

The Capture and Execution of Habibulla.—Habibulla, who had escaped from the citadel, was hotly pursued, but effectually delayed his pursuers by scattering handfuls of English sovereigns. Having reached his native wilds of the Kuhistan, he decided that his Commander-in-Chief should surrender to Nadir Shah and make terms with him for them both. However, with true Afghan suspicion, he feared that his envoy would make terms for himself only. He accordingly followed on his heels, surrendered and was promised his life by Nadir Shah. The tribesmen, however, were furious at this leniency being extended to the bandit who had wrought so much harm to Afghanistan and, since Habibulla was proved to have set his prison on fire, hoping to escape once again, he was condemned to death, as were his chief followers,

by the National Assembly. The miscreants were shot and each tribesman fired a bullet into the corpse of Habibulla so as to be able to boast, "I helped to kill the *Bacha-i-Sakau*".

The Early Career of King Nadir Shah.—In Chapter L a brief account is given of the *Musahiban* family, as it was termed, and it was shown that the new King was descended from both of the ruling branches of the Durrani tribe. Born at Dehra Dun on April 9, 1883, he was educated in that town and learned English, Arabic and Urdu. In 1900 his grandfather, *Sirdar* Yahya Khan, obtained permission for the family to return to Afghanistan, where, in 1903, Nadir Khan was appointed to command a regiment of Household Cavalry and was promoted general a year or two later. He accompanied King Habibulla to India. His position after the assassination of that monarch and his actions as a general in the Third Afghan War have been already recorded. He continued to be a leading personage at Kabul under Amanulla until, owing to his opposition to the injudicious haste that that ruler displayed in his reforms, he fell out of favour and retired to the post of Afghan Minister at Paris. This appointment he resigned owing to illness, which did not, however, prevent him from responding to the trumpet-call of duty.

The Reopening of the British Legation.—In May 1930 Mr. (now Sir Richard) Maconachie, the new British Minister, reached Kabul and shortly afterwards the Anglo-Afghan Treaty of 1921 was reaffirmed.

Local Risings in 1930.—As was only to be expected, there were some local risings against the new government. In February the hotheads among the Shinwaris revolted in favour of Amanulla, but, unsupported by the elders of the tribe, the movement was promptly suppressed. In July the misguided Kuhistanis, led by an uncle of the late Bandit Amir, also rose in rebellion. Thousands of these wild people took part in it, some 3000 of whom were captured and eleven of the ringleaders were executed.

The North-West Frontier Province.—At this point a

brief reference to the sinister activities of some Moslem inhabitants of this area, who are termed Red Shirts, is desirable. Their moving spirits were Abdul Ghaffar and his brother Khan Sahib, sons of a landowner on the Peshawar border. Both brothers were educated at the Church Missionary Society School at Peshawar. Khan Sahib also took a medical degree at Edinburgh and, at one time, was medical officer of the Guides. Their sister married the *Haji* of Turangzai, a notable firebrand.

Abdul Ghaffar in 1919 started a violent agitation against the Rowlatt Act, and, but for the defeat of the Afghans in the Khaibar Pass, the trouble would have been serious. Later, the brothers joined the Congress party and organised an unscrupulous campaign of hatred and vituperation against the British Raj.

In 1930 this occasioned the most serious crisis with which the British authorities had been faced since 1897.[1] The Peshawar district was invaded with extraordinary rapidity from the west by large numbers of Afridis and threatened on the north by Mohmand and Utman Khel *lashkars*. Elsewhere, too, as in the Tochi Valley and Southern Waziristan, posts were attacked, while attempts were made by hostile *Mullas* to raise Mohmand and Bajaur *lashkars*. The Kurram Valley was also invaded.

Winning the votes of the unsophisticated tribesmen by fantastic promises, Khan Sahib defeated the Ministry of the later Sir Abdul Qaiyum in September 1937 by a narrow majority, and was Chief Minister until the Congress Government resigned towards the close of 1939 under orders of the Congress Working Committee. It is obvious that the disturbances caused by the mischievous activities of the Red Shirts must have reacted unfavourably on our position in Afghanistan. It is, however, satisfactory to know that the Afghan Government discouraged the movement, while the Afghans, generally speaking, disapproved of the alliance between Moslem Red Shirts and "the idolaters", as they termed the Hindus.

[1] I have consulted *North-West Frontier Province Border Administration Report for 1930*.

A Soviet-Afghan Treaty.—In July 1931 a new treaty of neutrality and non-aggression between Russia and Afghanistan was negotiated. By its terms each Government undertook not to tolerate the existence in its territory of organizations or of individuals pursuing objectives which were hostile to the other. The treaty was to run for five years and included the neutrality of the one Power if the other Power were involved in war.

The Position in 1931.—It is interesting to note the steady progress made under Nadir Shah's beneficent rule. Shah Mahmud Khan, the Minister for War, after a campaign in the northern provinces, which involved much fighting, had subdued the lawless elements. He also had driven Ibrahim Beg, the "Robin Hood" of Bukhara, across the Oxus into the arms of the Soviet troops. Ibrahim Beg had been one of Enver Pasha's associates.

Peace thus reigned throughout Afghanistan, and the steady improvement of communications made for stability of government in this mountainous country. Nadir Shah was careful to restore to the *Mullas* their privileges and had rescinded the secularization of the laws and the abolition of *purdah*, the two changes which had most embittered them. He felt the necessity for reforms, but realized the fundamental importance of " hastening slowly ".

Foreigners at Kabul, apart from members of the various Legations, were few in number. Russia maintained an efficient weekly air service between Termez and Kabul and part of the mechanical staff of the Afghan air force was Russian, but, generally speaking, foreigners were not encouraged to reside in Afghanistan, nor to visit it, except for purposes which were approved of. The number of Europeans was estimated at seventy and included French archaeologists, a German Director of Posts and two Italian officers employed in the Artillery school.

The Declaration of Policy.—On November 27, 1932, King Nadir Shah published a declaration of policy in ten points; first, the foundation of the Government upon the principles of the law of Islam; second, the absolute

prohibition of alcoholic beverages; third, the establishment of a military school and of an arsenal for the manufacture of modern weapons; fourth, the maintenance of the diplomatic relations established by King Amanulla with foreign powers. Other measures included the repair of telegraphs and telephones and the reconditioning of roads ; the collection of all arrears of public revenue; the development of commercial relations with foreign powers; the advancement of public instruction; and finally, the reconstruction of the old Council of State and the appointment of a Prime Minister who would form a Cabinet, subject to the royal approval. The Cabinet which was formed consisted of Shah Wali Khan as Prime Minister, with Shah Mahmud Khan as War Minister. A Minister of the Interior and a Foreign Minister were also appointed.

The Support of the leading Mulla *of the Ghilzai Tribe.*—King Nadir was especially fortunate in securing the strong support of the *Hazrat Sahib* of Shorbazar, the leading *Mulla* of the Ghilzai tribe and the brother of Shir Aza, his staunch supporter. In a speech he made to Afghan students this divine exhorted them to study the occidental as well as the oriental sciences on the ground that " all sciences are useful, being light from the lights of Allah ". Furthermore, he exhorted them to study foreign languages in order to equip themselves for frustrating the knavish tricks of foreign enemies. It would seem that these statesmanlike exhortations proved that the *Hazrat Sahib* had realized that this was the only means for Moslem Afghanistan to regain and to retain economic and political independence. It was perhaps the most important pronouncement ever made by an Afghan divine, who must have fully realized the danger he ran of being assassinated by his fanatical fellow-countrymen.

The World Disarmament Conference, 1932.—During this year a great effort was made to secure disarmament, which is dealt with at length in the *Survey of International Affairs*. In voting on a resolution putting it on record that practically all the nations of the world were firmly

determined to adopt measures for the substantial reduction of armaments, the vote was adopted by forty-one votes to two, with eight abstentions. The two votes against adoption were those of Germany and the U.S.S.R., while Afghanistan and Turkey figured among the abstaining states.

CHAPTER LVIII

THE ASSASSINATION OF KING NADIR SHAH AND THE ACCESSION OF KING ZAHIR SHAH, 1933

Master of Masters, O Maker of heroes!
Clean-slicing, swift-finishing,
Making death beautiful,
Life but a coin to be staked in the pastime,
Whose issue is more than the transfer of being —
I am the will of God,
I am the Sword.

HENLEY.

The Plot of Gholam Nabi Khan, 1932.—When the revolution led by the brigand Habibulla broke out Gholam Nabi Khan, as mentioned in the previous chapter, acting in the interests of Amanulla, captured Mazar-i-Sharif, but upon hearing of the abdication of that monarch he had retired across the Oxus. After the accession of Nadir Shah, Gholam Nabi, tendering his submission, returned to Afghanistan. Proofs were, however, shortly forthcoming that, aided by Soviet agents, he was conspiring with Ghilzai, Durrani and other tribesmen for the restoration to the throne of Amanulla. Confronted by Nadir Shah with the proofs of his guilt, Gholam Nabi made no attempt to justify his treasonable conduct and was summarily executed. On the following day the General Assembly approved of this act of justice, which had taken place on November 8, 1932.

The Assassination of King Nadir Shah, November 8, 1933.—The new order in Afghanistan was not destined to be established without three tragedies. The first was the murder at Berlin in July, 1933, of Aziz Khan, an elder brother of the King, who was Afghan Minister. The assassin was a member of a body of Afghan students

who were drug addicts. Upon his arrest he declared that his action constituted a protest against the British being permitted to take control of the tribes of the North-West Frontier. In the same year another member of the same body, after failing to reach the British Minister, murdered the *Mir Munshi* and an English chauffeur. The third tragedy was by far the most serious. On that November day King Nadir Shah was attacked by some of his own trusted servants just outside the royal harem. The assassins shot him three times and then despatched him with daggers. The cause of this murder was revenge for the execution of Gholam Nabi, the chief assassin being the son of one of that traitor's servants. He struck exactly one year after the death of Gholam Nabi.

Thus fell King Nadir Shah, who ranks among the greatest rulers of Afghanistan. Without money or following, and suffering from very bad health, by sheer force of personality and courage, he had rescued his country, which was groaning under the tyranny of a cruel usurper, and had thereby saved it from a period of anarchy that might well have lasted for a generation. On ascending the throne, by a blend of firmness, tact and kindness he had succeeded in bestowing the priceless gift of peace on Afghanistan and had laid anew the foundations of national unity.

The Accession of King Zahir Shah.—It speaks well for the stability of the Government created by the murdered King and for the capacity and loyalty of *Sirdar* Hashim Khan and his brothers, that King Nadir's son, Zahir Shah, was immediately proclaimed King. It was hardly to be expected that there would be no disturbances. In Khost the " Crazy *Mulla* ", as he was termed, predicting the speedy arrival of Amanulla on an aeroplane, collected a following, which was joined by some Wazirs. However, the Afghan troops stationed at Matun gained a victory over the insurgents, and the attitude of the British authorities, who sternly forbade their own tribesmen from taking part in the rising, ended what might have developed into a serious situation. The Press showed grave doubts as to the stability of the position of Zahir

Shah, but these forebodings were happily falsified.

King Muhammand Zahir Shah.—The son of King Nadir Shah, who ascended the throne under such tragical circumstances, was born in 1914 and accompanied his father to France at the age of ten. There he studied for six years and learned French well ; he also speaks English. Returning to Afghanistan in 1930, in the following year he married Princess Umaira, the daughter of his uncle *Sirdar* Ahmad Shah, and the union has been blessed by the birth of two sons and two daughters. In this year he attended the Military College at Kabul and, in 1932, was appointed Assistant War Minister.

Zahir Shah has clearly inherited his father's ability, as is proved by the keen interest he takes in his army and, more especially, in his air force. In short, he is essentially a virile Afghan, devoted to manly sports. Under the guidance of his uncle, the able *Sirdar* Hashim Khan, His Majesty is studying the intricate problems with which Afghanistan is faced and is winning golden opinions by the courtesy of his manners, alike to the rich and to the poor.

The Afghan Constitution.—The Government is a constitutional monarchy, supreme legislative power being invested in the King, the Senate and the National Assembly, who constitute the Parliament.[1] The Senate consists of 45 members, nominated for life by the King, while the 109 members of the National Assembly are elected. The ancient *Loe Jirgah* or " National Assembly " is summoned at irregular intervals to discuss national questions of especial importance that are referred to it by the King. The Government includes departments for War, Foreign Affairs, Internal Affairs, Education, Commerce, Justice, Public Works, Revenue, Health, Posts and Telegraphs.

The Foundation of the National Bank of Afghanistan.—Upon his accession Nadir Shah was faced with an empty treasury. As a result the Afghani or Kabuli rupee — worth about one-quarter of the Indian rupee — began to fall sharply and it became an urgent matter to correct

[1] In this section I have consulted *The Statesman's Year-Book.*

the adverse balance of trade which existed. After an unsuccessful attempt in 1931, two years later, a National Bank was founded to deal with exchange, of which it was granted a monopoly, while the commercial side was dealt with by the formation of the Ashami (or Joint-Stock) Company. To it monopolies were granted which covered (*a*) the import of sugar and petroleum products; (*b*) purchases and sales on behalf of Government; and (*c*) exploitation of all mines and the establishment of industrial concerns in Afghanistan.

The Economic Policy of the Government.—By way of preface to the following remarks on the commercial policy of the Government, it must be remembered that Afghanistan is a poor country which supports an agricultural and pastoral people, many of whom perforce lead a nomadic life.

The chief export, which is a Government monopoly, is the sale of Karakuli lambskins, averaging perhaps one million sterling per annum. The second important export, which is valued at perhaps one-half of the former, is the fruit crop. The fact that the chief article of export is distinctly a luxury commodity, depending alike on prosperity and on changing fashion, constitutes a distinct weakness in the economic system of the country.

The policy of the Government has been to reduce imports by growing cotton and sugar beets, while factories have been established for the manufacture of cloth and sugar by the Ashami Company. The latest reports on this subject, however, tend to show that the Government has decided to sell these factories to private capitalists. It is to be noted that no luxuries can be imported into Afghanistan.

A second object that the Government has aimed at is the elimination of middlemen and the securing of all profits for the Afghan Government or the shareholders of the Ashami Company. This policy has naturally caused much soreness among the influential merchants of Peshawar and has many disadvantages.

Oil.—One of the most important imports, since lorries are gradually displacing camel transport wherever roads

have been made, is petrol. In 1937 a concession to search for oil over an area covering 270,000 square miles in Western Afghanistan was granted to the Inland Exploration Company of New York. The existence of oil was, I understand, proved, in the Herat area, but most unfortunately the small size of the field, the distance to the coast of the Arabian Sea, involving the construction of an expensive pipe-line, and the insignificant local demand for the product, compelled the company to relinquish the concession.

German Mining Concession.—In the autumn of 1937 a company termed "Afghanistan Mines Ltd." was registered under joint German and Afghan management. Although minerals probably exist in the country, the company met with little or no success and the concession has been relinquished.

To conclude this brief sketch: in December 1938 the reports show that while exports have been maintained, imports have decreased, with the satisfactory result that the year closed with a favourable balance of 6,119,609 Indian rupees, a result on which the Government may be justly congratulated.

Modern Afghanistan in the Making.—Nadir Shah, before his untimely death, had laid the foundations of a modern state and thanks mainly to the ability, high principles and courage of *Sirdar* Hashim Khan, and his brothers, slow but steady progress in this direction is being effected. It has to be remembered that there is a deep gulf, which it is difficult to bridge, between an Afghan educated in Europe and a tent-dweller or an inhabitant of the almost inaccessible mountain valleys. Hashim Khan fortunately, while himself a well-educated *Sirdar*, understands and sympathizes with his countrymen of every class while they, on their side, realize that he is a master of men.

Politically his position is both difficult and delicate, since he has to hold the balance between Russian officials and the representatives of Great Britain. The Afghans, quite naturally, have not forgotten the Third Afghan War. At the same time they fear the Soviet Government,

mistrust its policy and abominate its atheism.

The Position on the North-West Frontier.—Nor is the position in relation to the restless fanatical Wazirs and their neighbours lacking in delicacy. For generations, as we have seen, the Amirs have used the tribes on the British side of the frontier as an important card in their dealings with that Government, the ex-King Amanulla being notorious in this respect. However, under the present conditions, with a government which has established law, order and education in Afghanistan, is it not reasonable to hope that the tribesmen who are now living between two organized areas of civilization may gradually give up their passion for feuds and raiding and become law-abiding citizens? Recent reports from the North-West Frontier tend to show that roads, education and hospitals, together with settled conditions under the *pax Britannica*, are beginning to be appreciated by the warlike tribesmen, if only from the commercial point of view, as affording access to markets for their crops.

The Position of Women.—As we have seen, Amanulla lost his throne, partly owing to his insistence, among other reforms, of women, headed by the Queen, throwing aside their veils. Today women in the towns are veiled as completely as before, in spite of the abolition of the veil alike in Turkey and neighbouring Persia, but this is not necessarily a permanent state of affairs in Afghanistan, more especially as the nomad women do not follow the custom.

Education, Roads and Postal Service.—Education is being energetically but unobtrusively conducted, and is gradually producing satisfactory results. English is the medium of instruction in higher education.

Much money is being spent on roads which, if not comparable with those of Western Europe, bring the chief cities much nearer to one another and, generally speaking, are an agency for the spread of civilization. The same remark certainly applies to the postal service which now runs six days a week between the capital and Peshawar and links up all important centres.

Turkey, Russia and Afghanistan become Members of

the League of Nations.—When the League of Nations came into existence in January 1920 Amanulla was in sullen mood after his defeat in the Third Afghan War, and took no part in its formation. The passing years, however, changed the situation, but for more than a decade, following the policy of holding aloof from the League favoured by the Soviet Government, neither Afghanistan nor Turkey desired membership in it.

Persia had already joined the League before negotiating her treaty with Russia in 1921; Turkey followed in the same year and the Soviet Union, undoubtedly influenced by the militant policy of Japan, joined the League in September 1934, to be followed a few days later by Afghanistan.

The Four-Power Treaty of Saadabad, 1937.—In 1934 there arose a dispute between Iraq and Persia as to the rights of each Power on the Shatt-el-Arab. The tangled question came up before the League Council in January 1935, but without result. However, the case was subsequently removed from the agenda of the Council Meeting and the two Powers came to terms. More than this, in the autumn of 1935, preliminary negotiations for the formation of a Middle Eastern Pact were undertaken on the initiative of Persia, with the strong support of Turkey, who feared the ambitions of Italy in the Eastern Mediterranean. On July 4, 1937, an Iranian-Iraq Agreement, which settled on reasonable terms the boundary dispute in the Shatt-el-Arab, was signed, and the Four-Power Middle Eastern Pact, termed the Treaty of Saadabad, was signed at the "Palace of Felicity" (to translate the word), near Tehran, a few days later.

The Pact may be described as one of *bon voisinage*, but is not a military alliance. In it the four Powers also reaffirmed their loyalty to the Briand-Kellog Pact and to the League Covenant. After the act of signature had been performed, a Permanent Council of the Four Middle Eastern Powers was set up. The first resolution passed in the session which followed was to support the candidature of Persia, and then of each other, for election

to a seat on the Council of the League of Nations.

Of this important treaty the Istanbul Correspondent of *The Times* writes:[1] " Its signature will receive general approbation, inasmuch as it indicates that these four Moslem countries — some of them so long strangers or enemies one to the other — are now desirous of co-operating for their mutual benefit". It remains to add that, owing to the treaty of Iraq with Great Britain, and the treaty of Turkey with Soviet Russia, the Pact of Saadabad was signed with the approval of both the above-named Powers.

The Policy of the British Government.—In a recent speech[2] Lord Zetland, His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, made the following statesmanlike declaration: " A strong, stable and friendly Afghan administration has always been a British interest, and never more so perhaps than it is today, and if in the past we sought to secure our interests by a measure of control over and by granting subsidies to the Government of that country, we have now recognized the advantages of securing them through the agency of a stable, friendly and independent kingdom; for we are satisfied that the friendship of an independent sovereign State is a surer foundation on which to rest our common interests than a State subject to an uneasy subserviency, irksome to the freedom-loving spirit of the Afghan people. That there is a powerful bond of common interest between India and Afghanistan must be apparent to anyone who considers the geographical, the political, and the economic circumstances of the two countries.

" Hence the satisfaction and the sympathy with which we have watched the internal progress of the country during the past ten years under the wise policy of orderly development inaugurated by Nadir Shah and continued under the present King with the powerful aid of his

[1] July 19, 1939.

[2] This pronouncement was made after I had delivered a lecture at the Caxton Hall on " Afghanistan: The Present Position " to a joint meeting of the Royal Central Asian Society and The East India Association on March 13, 1940, at which Lord Zetland presided. It was followed by the tragic murder of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, and the wounding of Lord Zetland, Lord Lamington and Sir Louis Dane.

uncles, Muhammad Hashim, the Prime Minister, Shah Mahmud, the Defence Minister, who visited us here in London in 1937 and 1936 respectively, and Shah Wali, who was King Nadir's first representative at the Court of St. James. . . . The two countries have likewise a common interest in the maintenance of peace in the tribal areas which lie between their respective boundaries, and when, as unhappily sometimes occurs, we are driven by the lawlessness of the tribes to embark upon military action against them, we always bear closely in mind the possible repercussions of any action which we may have in mind upon the tribes upon the Afghan side of the border and upon the interests, consequently, of the Afghan régime."

The Strategical Position of Afghanistan.—Before concluding this work it seems desirable to make a few remarks on the strategical situation of the country. The Afghan army is recruited by a mixture of compulsory service for two years and of voluntary service for life. Officers are recruited for life. The peace strength of the army is 60,000, but its armed tribesmen, who may be half a million strong, constitute a formidable second line. Mechanized transport has been introduced to some extent, and a small air force has been established. It is clear that Russia alone is her potential enemy, and will be treated as such. Kabul, the capital, is protected from invasion by the U.S.S.R. owing to the lofty and rugged double range of the Hindu Kush. But Badakhshan and her other provinces in the Oxus Valley could not be effectually held against large Russian forces that the railway could transport to Termez, more especially as no reinforcements could be sent from Kabul during the winter months. Again, Russia, from the Trans-Caspian Railway (which runs from that sea to the main northern line), constructed a strategical branch line from Merv to New Kushk, which is situated only some eighty miles from Herat, with no intervening physical barrier, and Herat could hardly offer a long resistance to Russian heavy artillery. From Herat to Kandahar is some 200 miles by the caravan route *via* Sabzawar and Farah. The

country to be crossed presents few physical difficulties and is suitable for tanks, whippets, and lorries, albeit the roads are little more than tracks in most cases. If Persia were allied to Afghanistan, she might be able to attack the Russian lines of communication to some small extent.

We now take the other side of the situation. From the days of the Moghul Empire, Kabul and Kandahar have been held to be the Keys of India, and I should not envy the position of a Russian army which could only be supplied by a single-track railway from an immense distance, whether we reckon from Moscow *via* Orenburg and Bukhara or *via* the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea ; the distance in both cases is about 2,200 miles. I have travelled along both these routes on more than one occasion, and was struck by the lack of towns of any importance and of commercial activity throughout. The recently built town of Magnitogorodsk in the Ural Mountains, with its rich iron mines, will, however, have improved the Russian position to some extent. There is also the recent but badly constructed Turk-Sib railway, which runs from the Trans-Siberian railway at Novo-Sibirsk to a junction between Pishpok (Frunze) and the Sir Daria, not far from Tashkent. But the whole province of Russian Turkistan is now devoted to growing cotton, and food supplies for a large force would be unobtainable.

It would, then, seem to be unwise for Russia to attempt to invade India across Afghanistan, as she would presumably be met on the Kabul-Kandahar line by Afghan troops, firmly supported by British troops holding a strong position. Moreover, her lines of communication would be repeatedly attacked by the tribes on her flanks. On the other hand, Russia might be tempted to occupy Afghan-Turkistan in the Oxus Valley or even the Herat province. Yet to hold these conquests would need large forces, which it would be difficult to keep in the field.

To conclude this brief sketch, modern mechanized warfare requires enormous supplies of ammunition, of petrol and of innumerable other requisites. These cannot be furnished without double railway tracks, large

commercial centres in close proximity and rich corn lands, all of which are lacking in the vicinity of Northern Afghanistan. Consequently a Russian attempt to invade India across Afghanistan, more especially in view of the proved weakness of her army, would, in my opinion, be doomed to disastrous failure.

EPILOGUE

In concluding this work I would quote wise Doctor Johnson, who remarked: "Courage is reckoned the greatest of all virtues, because, unless a man has that virtue, he has no security for preserving any other". By a happy coincidence Abdur Rahman Khan, that truly great Amir who reunited all the provinces of Afghanistan under his sway, once remarked to Sir Mortimer Durand that all the virtues could be grafted on the stock of courage, without which no nation could prosper. I have been in touch with Afghans for many years and I have especially admired their outstanding virility. I can therefore, with full confidence in its realization, wish Afghanistan a prosperous future.

commercial centres include agricultural and industrial lands all of which are lying in the vicinity of Northern Afghanistan. Consequently a Russian attempt to invade and occupy Afghanistan, more especially in view of the proved weakness of her army, would, in my opinion, be doomed to disastrous failure.

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APPENDIX A

THE SIMLA MANIFESTO

SIMLAH, October 1, 1838.

The Right Hon. the Governor-General of India having, with the concurrence of the Supreme Council, directed the assemblage of a British force for service across the Indus, his Lordship deems it proper to publish the following exposition of the reasons which have led to this important measure.

It is a matter of notoriety that the treaties entered into by the British Government in the year 1832, with the Ameers of Sindh, the Newab of Bhawalpore, and Maharajah Runjeet Singh, had for their object, by opening the navigation of the Indus, to facilitate the extension of commerce, and to gain for the British nation in Central Asia that legitimate influence which an interchange of benefits would naturally produce.

With a view to invite the aid of the *de facto* rulers of Afghanistan to the measures necessary for giving full effect to those treaties, Captain Burnes was deputed, towards the close of the year 1836, on a mission to Dost Mahomed Khan, the chief of Caubul. The original objects of that officer's mission were purely of a commercial nature. Whilst Captain Burnes, however, was on his journey to Caubul, information was received by the Governor-General that the troops of Dost Mahomed Khan had made a sudden and unprovoked attack on those of our ancient ally, Maharajah Runjeet Singh. It was naturally to be apprehended that his Highness the Maharajah would not be slow to avenge the aggression; and it was to be feared that, the flames of war being once kindled in the very regions into which we were endeavouring to extend our commerce, the peaceful and beneficial purposes of the British Government would be altogether frustrated. In order to avert a result so calamitous, the Governor-General resolved on authorizing Captain Burnes to intimate to Dost Mahomed Khan, that if he should evince a disposition to come to just and reasonable terms with the Maharajah, his Lordship would exert his good offices with his Highness for the restoration of an amicable understanding between the two powers. The Maharajah, with the characteristic confidence which he has uniformly placed in the faith and friendship of the British nation, at once assented to the proposition of the

Governor-General, to the effect that, in the meantime, hostilities on his part should be suspended.

It subsequently came to the knowledge of the Governor-General that a Persian army was besieging Herat; that intrigues were actively prosecuted throughout Afghanistan, for the purpose of extending Persian influence and authority to the banks of, and even beyond, the Indus; and that the Court of Persia had not only commenced a course of injury and insult to the officers of her Majesty's Mission in the Persian territory, but had afforded evidence of being engaged in designs wholly at variance with the principles and objects of its alliance with Great Britain.

After much time spent by Captain Burnes in fruitless negotiation at Caubul, it appeared that Dost Mahomed Khan, chiefly in consequence of his reliance upon Persian encouragement and assistance, persisted, as respected his misunderstanding with the Sikhs, in urging the most unreasonable pretensions, such as the Governor-General could not, consistently with justice and his regard for the friendship of Maharajah Runjeet Singh, be the channel of submitting to the consideration of his Highness; that he avowed schemes of aggrandisement and ambition injurious to the security and peace of the frontiers of India; and that he openly threatened, in furtherance of those schemes, to call in every foreign aid which he could command. Ultimately he gave his undisguised support to the Persian designs in Afghanistan, of the unfriendly and injurious character of which, as concerned the British power in India, he was well apprised, and by his utter disregard of the views and interests of the British Government, compelled Captain Burnes to leave Caubul without having effected any of the objects of his mission.

It was now evident that no further interference could be exercised by the British Government to bring about a good understanding between the Sikh ruler and Dost Mahomed Khan, and the hostile policy of the latter chief showed too plainly that, so long as Caubul remained under his government, we could never hope that the tranquillity of our neighbourhood would be secured, or that the interests of our Indian Empire would be preserved inviolate.

The Governor-General deems it in this place necessary to revert to the siege of Herat and the conduct of the Persian nation. The siege of that city has now been carried on by the Persian army for many months. The attack upon it was a most unjustifiable and cruel aggression, perpetrated and continued, notwithstanding the solemn and repeated remonstrances of the British Envoy at the Court of Persia, and after every just and becoming offer of accommodation had been made and rejected. The besieged have behaved with a gallantry and fortitude worthy of the justice of

their cause; and the Governor-General would yet indulge the hope that their heroism may enable them to maintain a successful defence, until succours shall reach them from British India. In the meantime, the ulterior designs of Persia, affecting the interests of the British Government, have been, by a succession of events, more and more openly manifested. The Governor-General has recently ascertained by an official despatch from Mr. M'Neill, Her Majesty's Envoy, that his Excellency has been compelled, by a refusal of his just demands, and by a systematic course of disrespect adopted towards him by the Persian Government, to quit the Court of the Shah, and to make a public declaration of the cessation of all intercourse between the two Governments. The necessity under which Great Britain is placed of regarding the present advance of the Persian arms into Afghanistan as an act of hostility towards herself, has also been officially communicated to the Shah, under the express order of her Majesty's Government.

The Chiefs of Candahar (brothers of Dost Mahomed Khan of Caubul) have avowed their adherence to the Persian policy, with the same full knowledge of its opposition to the rights and interests of the British nation in India, and have been openly assisting in the operations against Herat.

In the crisis of affairs consequent upon the retirement of our Envoy from Caubul, the Governor-General felt the importance of taking immediate measures for arresting the rapid progress of foreign intrigue and aggression towards our own territories.

His attention was naturally drawn at this conjuncture to the position and claims of Shah Soojah-ool-Moolk, a monarch who, when in power, had cordially acceded to the measures of united resistance to external enmity, which were at that time judged necessary by the British Government, and who, on his empire being usurped by its present rulers, had found an honourable asylum in the British dominions.

It had been clearly ascertained, from the information furnished by the various officers who have visited Afghanistan, that the Barukzye chiefs, from their disunion and unpopularity, were ill fitted, under any circumstances, to be useful allies to the British Government, and to aid us in our just and necessary measures of national defence. Yet so long as they refrained from proceedings injurious to our interests and security, the British Government acknowledged and respected their authority; but a different policy appeared to be now more than justified by the conduct of those chiefs, and to be indispensable to our own safety. The welfare of our possessions in the East requires that we should have on our western frontier an ally who is interested in resisting aggression, and establishing tranquillity, in the place of chiefs ranging themselves in subservience to a hostile power, and seeking to promote

schemes of conquest and aggrandisement.

After serious and mature deliberation, the Governor-General was satisfied that a pressing necessity, as well as every consideration of policy and justice, warranted us in espousing the cause of Shah Soojah-ool-Moolk, whose popularity throughout Afghanistan had been proved to his Lordship by the strong and unanimous testimony of the best authorities. Having arrived at this determination, the Governor-General was further of opinion that it was just and proper, no less from the position of Maharajah Runjeet Singh, than from his undeviating friendship towards the British Government, that His Highness should have the offer of becoming a party to the contemplated operations.

Mr. Macnaghten was accordingly deputed in June last to the Court of His Highness, and the result of his mission has been the conclusion of a triplicate treaty by the British Government, the Maharajah, and Shah Soojah-ool-Moolk, whereby his Highness is guaranteed in his present possessions, and has bound himself to co-operate for the restoration of the Shah to the throne of his ancestors. The friends and enemies of any one of the contracting parties have been declared to be the friends and enemies of all.

Various points have been adjusted, which had been the subjects of discussion between the British Government and his Highness the Maharajah, the identity of whose interests with those of the Honourable Company has now been made apparent to all the surrounding States. A guaranteed independence will, upon favourable conditions, be tendered to the Ameers of Sindh, and the integrity of Herat, in the possession of its present ruler, will be fully respected; while by the measures completed, or in progress, it may reasonably be hoped that the general freedom and security of commerce will be promoted; that the name and just influence of the British Government will gain their proper footing among the nations of Central Asia; that tranquillity will be established upon the most important frontier of India; and that a lasting barrier will be raised against hostile intrigue and encroachment.

His Majesty, Shah Shoojah-ool-Moolk will enter Afghanistan, surrounded by his own troops, and will be supported against foreign interference and factious opposition by a British army. The Governor-General confidently hopes that the Shah will be speedily replaced on his throne by his own subjects and adherents; and when once he shall be secured in power, and the independence and integrity of Afghanistan established, the British army will be withdrawn. The Governor-General has been led to these measures by the duty which is imposed upon him of providing for the security of the possessions of the British Crown; but, he rejoices that, in the discharge of his duty, he will be enabled to assist in restoring the union and prosperity of the Afghan people. Through-

out the approaching operations, British influence will be sedulously employed to further every measure of general benefit, to reconcile differences, to secure oblivion of injuries, and to put an end to the distractions by which, for so many years, the welfare and happiness of the Afghans have been impaired. Even to the chiefs, whose hostile proceedings have given just cause of offence to the British Government, it will seek to secure liberal and honourable treatment, on their tendering early submission, and ceasing from opposition to that course of measures which may be judged the most suitable for the general advantage of their country.

By order of the Right Hon. Governor-General of India.

W. H. Macnaghten
Secretary to the Government of India,
with the Governor-General

APPENDIX B

THE TREATY OF CAPITULATION

[The following are translations of the different documents referred to in the above-mentioned chapter, marking the different stages of the treaty under which the English evacuated Caubul. No. I is the draft of the original treaty which Macnaghten was negotiating at the time of his death. The articles, as proposed by the Afghan chiefs, are in inverted commas. The observations which follow contain the assent of the English representative. And the *Remarks* in brackets are those of the Afghan chiefs; the original being in the handwriting of Akbar Khan.]

I

Rough Draft of the Treaty with the Assent of the English Authorities

Article 1. "There shall be no delay in the departure of the English Army."

Agreed to. They will march twenty-four hours after having received a thousand carriage-cattle, which shall be either camels or yaboos.

[*Remark*. It rests with them (the English); let them pay the hire as they may be able.]

Article 2. "Afghan Sirdars shall accompany the army, to prevent any one offering opposition, and to assist in procuring supplies."

It is very advisable.

[*Remark*. Sirdar Oosman Khan and Shah Dowlut Khan.]

Article 3. "The Jellalabad army shall march for Peshawur before the Caubul force starts."

It is agreed to. Do you name some person who shall accompany them.

[*Remark*. Abdool Ghuffoor Khan.]

Article 4. "The Ghuznee force, having made their preparations, shall speedily march to Peshawur by Caubul."

It is agreed to. Do you name some proper person to accompany them.

[*Remark.* A relation of the Naib or of Mehtur Moossa.]

Article 5. "The Candahar force, and all other British troops in Afghanistan, shall quickly depart for Hindostan."

It is agreed. Let proper people accompany them.

[*Remark.* Newab Jubbur Khan.]

Article 6. "The whole of the property of the Ameer (Dost Mahomed Khan) which is in the hands of the English Government, or of individual officers, shall be left behind."

It is agreed to. Whatever is with the public authorities is known to you; whatever is with private officers point out and take.

Article 7. "Whatever property belonging to the English cannot be carried away, shall be taken care of, and sent by the first opportunity."

It is agreed to: but we have given over all that remains to the Newab.

[*Remark.* The guns, ordnance stores, and muskets, must be given to me.]

Article 8. "In case Shah Soojah should wish to remain at Caubul, we will give him yearly a subsistence of a lakh of rupees."

It is agreed to. Do whatever you think advisable, wishing to show your friendship for us.

Article 9. "In case the family of Shah Soojah should be left behind, from want of carriage-cattle, we will fix the place now occupied by them in the Balla Hissar for their dwelling-place, until they can depart for Hindostan."

It is agreed to. The honour of the King is the honour of the Douranees; and it is becoming in you.[1]

Article 10. "When the English army arrives at Peshawur, arrangements shall be made for the march of Dost Mahomed Khan, and all other Afghans, with all their property, families, and children."

It is agreed to. They shall all be sent to you with honour and in safety.

Article 11. "When Ameer Dost Mahomed Khan and the others arrive safely at Peshawur, then the family of the Shah shall be at liberty to depart; that departing they may arrive at the place fixed upon."

It is agreed to.

[1] The 8th and 9th articles are scored out in the original by Akbar Khan, as though, on consideration, they were distasteful to him.

Article 12. "Four English gentlemen shall remain as hostages in Caubul until Ameer Dost Mahomed Khan and the other Afghans shall have arrived at Peshawur, when the English gentlemen shall be allowed to depart."

It is agreed to.

[*Remark*. Let there be six hostages.]

Article 13. "Sirdar Mahomed Akbar Khan and Sirdar Oosman Khan shall accompany the English army to Peshawur, and take them there in safety." [1]

It is agreed to.

[*Remark*. Sirdar Mahomed Akbar Khan.]

Article 14. "After the departure of the English, friendly relations shall be continued, — *i.e.*, that the Afghan Government, without the consent and advice of the English Government, shall not form any treaty or connection with a foreign power; and should they (the Afghans) ever ask assistance against foreign invasion, the English Government will not delay in sending such assistance."

It is agreed to, as far as we are concerned; but in this matter the Governor-General of India alone has authority. We will do our best to bring about friendship between the two governments; and by the blessing of the Almighty this wish will be obtained, and friendship exist for the future.

Article 15. "Any one who may have assisted Shah Soojah and the English, and may wish to accompany them, shall be allowed to do so. We will not hinder them. And if they remain here, no one will call them to account for what they have done, and no one shall molest them under any pretence. They may remain in this country like the other inhabitants." [2]

We have interpolated a few words, and it will be friendship if you comply with them.

Article 16. "Should any English gentleman unavoidably be detained, he shall be treated honourably until such time as he can depart." — [MS. Records.]

II

[The following articles contain the further demands of the Afghans advanced after Macnaghten's death. The observations immediately following the articles are by the English negotiators. The *remarks* in brackets by the Afghans.]

Article 1. "Whatever coin there may be in the public treasury must be given up."

[1] This article is scored out in the original.

[2] The whole of this article also is scored out. Its provisions seem to have been extended, suggestively, by Pottinger, but disapproved by Akbar Khan.

We have set apart two lakhs of rupees for our expenses to Peshawur, which is twenty-four yaboos' loads. If there is more than this in the public treasury, either in gold mohurs, ducats, or rupees, it is yours. If you do not believe this, send some one to note and inspect the loads on the day of our departure. If we have said truly, give us a blessing; and if we have spoken falsely, it is your property, take it away, and we shall be convicted of falsehood.

[*Remark*. Let them pay the hire of the yaboos and camels.]

Article 2. "With reference to the remark that was made that we should give up all our guns but six, we have with the force one and a half companies of artillerymen. You have fixed six guns. Half of a company would remain without equipments. Be good enough to give three more small guns, such as are drawn by mules, for the other half-company. It will be a great kindness."

[*Remark*. They cannot be given.]

Article 3. "The muskets in excess of those in use with the regiments must be left behind."

This is agreed to. Whatever muskets are in addition to those in use with the regiments, together with shot and powder and other ordnance stores, all by way of friendship shall be the property of the Newab.

Article 4. "General Sale, together with his wife and daughter, and the other gentlemen of rank who are married and have children, until the arrival of the Ameer Dost Mahomed Khan and the other Afghans and their families, and Douranees and Ghilzyes, from Hindostan, shall remain as guests with us; that when the Ameer Dost Mahomed Khan shall have arrived, they also shall be allowed to depart with honour from Afghanistan."

General Sale is with the army in Jellalabad, the departure of which is fixed to take place previous to our arrival; and as for the other two or three gentlemen who are married and present here, we have sent a man to them. They, having seen their families, report that their families will not consent to this proposal; (adding) that you men may do as you like — no one can order us. This proposal is contrary to all order. We now beg you to be good enough to excuse the women from this suffering, and we agree to give as many gentlemen as you may wish for. In friendship, kindness and consideration are necessary, not overpowering the weak with sufferings. Since, for a long time past, we have shown kindness and respect to all Afghans of rank and consequence with whom we have had dealings, you should consider what we have done for them, and not forget kindness. As Shah Soojah was father of a family, and the Ameer Dost Mahomed Khan was with his family, and no one gave them annoyance, and we showed them respect,

you also now show similar kindness, that friendship may be increased.

[*Remark.* Let them remain with their families. Let the family of the General stop in Caubul, until he himself comes from Jellalabad, — Sturt with his family, Boyd with his family, and Anderson with his family.]

ELDRED POTTINGER, Pol. Agent.
W. K. ELPHINSTONE, Major-Gen.[1]

III

[The following is a draft of the new treaty submitted by the Afghan chiefs, containing the additional articles, and embodying the matter in Akbar Khan's " Remarks ".]

Agreement of Peace that has been determined on with the Frank English gentlemen, to which engagement, if they consent and act accordingly, on the part of the heads and leaders of Afghanistan henceforward no infractions will occur to their friendly engagements.

1st. That the going of the gentlemen shall be speedy. In regard to the carriage-cattle, let them send money that they may be purchased and sent.

2nd. As regards the going of the Sirdars with the English army that no person may injure it on the way, Sirdar Mahomed Akbar Khan or Sirdar Mahomed Oosman Khan, whichever may be wished by the English, will be appointed and sent.

3rd. The army of Jellalabad shall march previous to the army of Caubul, and proceed to Peshawur. Sirdar Abdool Suffoor Khan having been appointed, will leave this and proceed, that he may previously accompany them; secondly, the road of Bhungush has been appointed.

4th. The Ghuznee force having got quickly ready will proceed by the road of Caubul to Peshawur. A relative of Naib Ameen-oolah Khan, with Mehtur Moosa Khan, has been appointed to accompany it.

5th. The army of Candahar and other parts of Afghanistan, wherever an army may be, will quickly depart for India. Newab Abdool Jubbar Khan has been appointed to carry this into effect.

6th. Whatever property of the Ameer may be with the English will be returned, and nothing retained.

7th. Whatever property of the English may be left for want of carriage will become the property of the Newab.

[1] MS. Records.

8th. If the family of Shah Soojah, on account of want of carriage, may remain here, they will be placed in the house of Hadjee Khan.

9th. Whenever the English army may arrive at Peshawur, they will make arrangements for the return of Ameer Dost Mahomed Khan, the Afghans and their families, that are in India.

10th. That the English gentlemen, with their families, will be left at Caubul as hostages, until the Ameer Dost Mahomed Khan, with the rest of the Afghans and their families, may arrive at Peshawur; or, secondly, that six hostages may be left.

11th. After the departure of the English there shall be perfect friendship between the two states in so much so that the Government of Afghanistan, without the advice and approval of the British Government, shall enter into no connection or correspondence with any other power; but if, in its defence, it may require the assistance of the English, they will not delay to afford it. Should the British Government not consent to this, the Afghans are free to make friends with any one they like.

12th. If any gentleman would wish to remain in Caubul, on account of his private affairs, he may do so, and will be treated with justice and respect.

13th. Whatever cash, whether gold or silver, may be in the treasury, shall be paid to Newab Zemaun Khan. A trustworthy person will be appointed, who will issue supplies from stage to stage as far as Peshawur.

14th. With regard to artillery, six guns have been determined on. They are enough. More will not be given. Secondly, the three mule guns will be given.

15th. The spare arms shall be given to Newab Mahomed Zemaun Khan.

16th. The hostages to be left here, and these persons with their families — General Sale, Captains Sturt, Boyd, and Anderson.

17th. Let General Sale go with the army to Jellalabad, and his family remain here; after taking the army to Jellalabad, let him return to Caubul.

18th. If any of the Frank[1] gentlemen have taken a Mussulman wife, she shall be given up.

If there may be questions about any article, send a note quickly by the bearer. — [MS. Records.]

[1] Frank or Feringhi signifies a European.

IV
THE RATIFIED TREATY

Translation of a Treaty between the English Authorities at Caubul and the Afghan Nobles. (Dated in the month of Ze-vol-Kadh)

The cause of writing this confidential paper, and the intention of forming this unparalleled friendly treaty, is this: — That at the present happy moment, to put away strife and contention, and avert discord and enmity, the representatives of the great English nation — that is, the high of rank and respected Eldred Pottinger, the ambassador and agent of the English Government, and General Elphinstone, the commander of the English forces — have concluded a comprehensive treaty containing certain articles, which they have confided to the hands of the Afghan nobility, that by it the chain of friendship may be strengthened. And it has been settled that the Afghan nobles shall give a similar writing.

An engagement is now m .de by his Majesty Newab Mahomed Zemaun Khan, King of Afghanistan, and Naib Ameen-oollah Khan, and the chief nobles of Afghanistan, whose seals are affixed to and ornament this document. The articles of the treaty are as follows:

Article 1. That the British troops shall speedily quit the territories of Afghanistan and march to India, and shall not return; and twenty-four hours after receiving the carriage-cattle the army shall start.

Article 2. That on our part the Sirdars, Oosman Khan and Shoojah-ool-dowlah Khan, be appointed to accompany the before-mentioned army to the boundaries of Afghanistan and convey it to the boundary of the Sikh territory; so that no one shall offer molestation on the road; and that carriage-cattle and provisions may be procured for it.

Article 3. That the English force at Jellalabad shall march for Peshawur before the Caubul army arrives, and shall not delay on the road.

Article 4. Having brought the force at Ghuznee in safety to Caubul, under the protection of one of the relations of Naib Ameen-oollah Khan, we will send it to Peshawur unmolested under the care of another trustworthy person.

Article 5. Since, according to agreement the troops at Candahar and other parts of Afghanistan are to start quickly for India, and make over those territories to our agents, we on our part appoint trustworthy persons who may provide them with provisions and protection, and preserve them from molestation.

Article 6. All goods and property, and stores and cattle,

belonging to Sirdar Dost Mahomed Khan, which may be in the hands of the English, shall be given up, and none retained.

Article 7. Six English gentlemen, who remain here as our guests, shall be treated with courtesy. When the Ameer Dost Mahomed Khan and the other Afghans shall arrive at Peshawur, we will allow the above-mentioned English gentlemen to depart with honour.

Article 8. After the departure of the English army according to the treaty, should assistance against foreign invasion be at any time demanded, they (the English Government) shall not delay. Between (the Governments) friendship and good-will shall exist; and we will not make a treaty with any but the above-mentioned English Government. And in case the Governor-General of India should not agree to this proposal, we are at liberty to form an alliance with any other power.

Article 9. Should any English gentlemen be unavoidably detained in Caubul, we will treat him with all respect and consideration, and on his departure dismiss him with honour.

Article 10. The English can take six horse-artillery guns and three mule guns, and the rest, by way of friendship, shall be left for our use. And all muskets and ordnance stores in the magazine shall, as a token of friendship, be made over to our agents.

Article 11. Such English soldiers as may be left sick or wounded at Caubul shall be at liberty to return to their own country on their recovery.

This is the treaty, the articles of which have been entered into between the nobles of the Mahomedan faith and the distinguished gentlemen. From which articles we will not depart. Written in the month of Ze-vol-Kadh, in the year of the Mahomedan faith 1257.

(Sealed)

MAHOMED ZEMAUN KHAN	KHAN MAHOMED KHAN
MEER HAJEE KHAN	ABDOOL KHALIK KHAN
SEKUNDUR KHAN	AMEEN-OOLLAH KHAN
DARWEESH KHAN	MEER ASLAN KHAN
ALLEE KHAN	SUMUD KHAN
MAHOMED AKBAR KHAN	MAHOMED NASIR KHAN
MAHOMED OOSMAN KHAN	ABDOOLLAH KHAN
GHOLAM AHMED KHAN	GHUFFOOR KHAN
GHOLAM MAHOMED KHAN	MEER ALTEB KHAN

[MS. Records.]

APPENDIX C

AGREEMENT BETWEEN HIS HIGHNESS AMIR ABDUR RAHMAN KHAN, G.C.S.I., AMIR OF AFGHANISTAN AND ITS DEPENDENCIES, ON THE ONE PART, AND SIR HENRY MORTIMER DURAND, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., FOREIGN SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, ON THE OTHER PART

Whereas the British Government has represented to His Highness the Amir that the Russian Government presses for the literal fulfilment of the Agreement of 1873 between Russia and England by which it was decided that the river Oxus should form the northern boundary of Afghanistan, from Lake Victoria (Wood's Lake) or Sarikol on the east to the junction of the Kokcha with the Oxus, and whereas the British Government considers itself bound to abide by the terms of this Agreement, if the Russian Government equally abides by them, His Highness Amir Abdur Rahman Khan, G.C.S.I., Amir of Afghanistan and its Dependencies, wishing to show his friendship to the British Government and his readiness to accept their advice in matters affecting his relations with Foreign Powers, hereby agrees that he will evacuate all the districts held by him to the north of this portion of the Oxus on the clear understanding that all the districts lying to the south of this portion of the Oxus, and not now in his possession, be handed over to him in exchange. And Sir Henry Mortimer Durand, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, hereby declares on the part of the British Government that the transfer to His Highness the Amir of the said districts lying to the south of the Oxus is an essential part of this transaction, and undertakes that arrangements will be made with the Russian Government to carry out the transfer of the said lands to the north and south of the Oxus.

(Sd.) H. M. DURAND

Kabul, 12th November 1893.

(Sd.) AMIR ABDUR RAHMAN KHAN

12th November 1893 (2nd Jamadi-ul-awal 1311).

AGREEMENT BETWEEN HIS HIGHNESS AMIR ABDUR RAHMAN KHAN, G.C.S.I., AMIR OF AFGHANISTAN AND ITS DEPENDENCIES, ON THE ONE PART, AND SIR HENRY MORTIMER DURAND, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., FOREIGN SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, REPRESENTING THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ON THE OTHER PART

Whereas certain questions have arisen regarding the frontier of Afghanistan on the side of India, and whereas both His Highness the Amir and the Government of India are desirous of settling these questions by a friendly understanding, and of fixing the limit of their respective spheres of influence, so that for the future there may be no difference of opinion on the subject between the allied Governments, it is hereby agreed as follows:

(1) The eastern and southern frontier of His Highness's dominions, from Wakhan to the Persian border, shall follow the line shown in the map attached to this agreement.

(2) The Government of India will at no time exercise interference in the territories lying beyond this line on the side of Afghanistan, and His Highness the Amir will at no time exercise interference in the territories lying beyond this line on the side of India.

(3) The British Government thus agrees to His Highness the Amir retaining Asmar and the valley above it, as far as Chanak. His Highness agrees on the other hand that he will at no time exercise interference in Swat, Bajaur or Chitral, including the Arnawai or Bashgal valley. The British Government also agrees to leave to His Highness the Birmal tract as shown in the detailed map already given to His Highness, who relinquishes his claim to the rest of the Waziri country and Dawar. His Highness also relinquishes his claim to Chageh.

(4) The frontier line will hereafter be laid down in detail and demarcated, wherever this may be practicable and desirable, by Joint British and Afghan Commissioners, whose object will be to arrive by mutual understanding at a boundary which shall adhere with the greatest possible exactness to the line shown in the map attached to this agreement, having due regard to the existing local rights of villages adjoining the frontier.

(5) With reference to the question of Chaman, the Amir withdraws his objection to the new British Cantonment and concedes to the British Government the rights purchased by him in the Sirkai Tibrai water. At this part of the frontier, the line will be drawn as follows:

From the crest of the Khwaja Amran range near the Peha Kotal, which remains in British territory, the line will run in such a direction as to leave Murgha Chaman and the Sharobo spring to Afghanistan, and to pass half-way between the new Chaman Fort and the Afghan outpost known locally as Lashkar Dand? The line will then pass half-way between the railway station and the hill known as the Mian Baldak, and turning southwards, will rejoin the Khwaja Amran range, leaving the Gwasha Post in British territory, and the road to Shorawak to the west and south of Gwasha in Afghanistan. The British Government will not exercise any interference within half a mile of the road.

(6) The above articles of agreement are regarded by the Government of India and His Highness the Amir of Afghanistan as a full and satisfactory settlement of all the principal differences of opinion which have arisen between them in regard to the frontier, and both the Government of India and His Highness the Amir undertake that any differences of detail, such as those which will have to be considered hereafter by the officers appointed to demarcate the boundary line, shall be settled in a friendly spirit, so as to remove for the future, as far as possible, all causes of doubt and misunderstanding between the two Governments.

(7) Being fully satisfied of His Highness's good-will to the British Government, and wishing to see Afghanistan independent and strong, the Government of India will raise no objection to the purchase and import by His Highness of munitions of war, and they will themselves grant him some help in this respect. Further, in order to mark their sense of the friendly spirit in which His Highness the Amir has entered into these negotiations, the Government of India undertake to increase by the sum of six lakhs of rupees a year the subsidy of twelve lakhs now granted to His Highness.

(Sd.) H. M. Durand

Kabul;
The 12th November 1893

(Sd.) Abdur Rahman Khan

APPENDIX D

TRANSLATION OF THE TREATY

Praise be to Allah!

His Majesty Siraj-ul-millat-wa-ud-din[1] Amir Habibulla Khan, Independent King of the State of Afghanistan and its dependencies, on the one part, and the Honourable Mr. Louis William Dane, C.S.I., Foreign Secretary of the Mighty Government of India and Representative of the exalted British Government, on the other part.

His said Majesty does hereby agree to this that, in matters of principle and of subsidiary importance of the Treaty regarding internal and external affairs and of the engagements which His Highness, my late father, that is, Zia-ul-millat-wa-ud-din,[2] who has found mercy, may God enlighten his tomb! concluded and acted upon with the exalted British Government, I also have acted, am acting, and will act upon the same agreement and compact, and I will not contravene them in any dealing or in any promise.

The said Honourable Mr. Louis William Dane does hereby agree to this that as to the very agreement and engagement that the exalted British Government concluded and acted upon with the noble father of His Majesty Siraj-ul-millat-wa-ud-din, that is, His Highness Zia-ul-millat-wa-ud-din, who has found mercy, regarding internal and external affairs and matters of principle or of subsidiary importance, I confirm them and write that they (the British Government) will not act contrary to those agreements and engagements in any way or at any time.

Made on Tuesday, the 14th day of Muharram-ul-Haram of the year 1323 Hijri, corresponding to the 21st day of March of the year 1905 A.D.

[Persian seal of Amir Habibulla Khan.]
This[3] is correct. I have sealed and signed.

AMIR HABIBULLA

Louis W. Dane,
Foreign Secretary,
representing the Government of India.

[1] This signifies " Lamp of the Nation and of the Faith."
[2] This signifies " Lord of the Nation and of the Faith."
[3] In the handwriting of the Amir.

APPENDIX E

ARTICLES OF THE ANGLO-RUSSIAN AGREEMENT AS AFFECTING AFGHANISTAN

The high contracting parties being animated with a sincere desire to assure the perfect security of their respective frontiers in Central Asia and to maintain there a solid and lasting peace, have decided to conclude a Convention to that effect.

Article I.—His Majesty's Government declare that they have no intention of changing the political status of Afghanistan; His Majesty's Government further engage to exercise their influence in Afghanistan only in a pacific sense and will not themselves take in Afghanistan, and will not encourage Afghanistan to take any measures threatening Russia. The Russia Government on their part declare that they recognize Afghanistan as outside the sphere of Russian influence, and they engage that all their political relations with Afghanistan shall be conducted through the intermediary of His Majesty's Government. They further undertake not to send any agents into Afghanistan.

Article II.—His Majesty's Government having declared in the Treaty signed at Kabul on the 21st March 1905 that they recognized the Agreement and the engagements concluded with the late Amir Abdur Rahman and that they have no intention of interfering in the internal government of Afghanistan, His Majesty's Government engage not to annex or to occupy in contravention of that Treaty any portion of Afghanistan or to interfere in the internal administration of the country, provided that the Amir fulfils the engagements already contracted towards His Majesty's Government under the abovementioned Treaty.

Article III.—The Russian and Afghan authorities specially designated for the purpose on the frontier or in the frontier provinces may establish direct reciprocal relations with each other for the settlement of local questions of a non-political character.

Article IV.—The British and Russian Governments declare that they recognize as regards Afghanistan the principle of equality of treatment in matters concerning commerce and agree that any facilities which may have been, or shall be hereafter obtained for British and British Indian trade and traders shall be equally applied

to Russian trade and traders. Should the progress of commerce establish the necessity for commercial agents, the two Governments will agree as to the measures to be taken, due regard being had to the Amir's Sovereign rights.

Article V.—The present arrangements will only enter into force from the moment when the British Government has notified to the Russian Government the consent of the Amir to the terms above stipulated.

APPENDIX F

THE TREATY OF PEACE OF AUGUST 8, 1919

The following articles for the restoration of peace have been agreed upon by the British Government and the Afghan Government:

Article 1

From the date of the signing of this Treaty there shall be peace between the British Government, on the one part, and the Government of Afghanistan on the other.

Article 2

In view of the circumstances which have brought about the present war between the British Government and the Government of Afghanistan, the British Government, to mark their displeasure, withdraw the privilege enjoyed by former Amirs of importing arms, ammunition and warlike munitions through India to Afghanistan.

Article 3

The arrears of the late Amir's subsidy are furthermore confiscated, and no subsidy is granted to the present Amir.

Article 4

At the same time, the British Government are desirous of the re-establishment of the old friendship, that has so long existed between Afghanistan and Great Britain, provided they have guarantees that the Afghan Government are, on their part, sincerely anxious to regain the friendship of the British Government. The British Government are prepared, therefore, provided the Afghan Government prove this by their acts and conduct, to receive another Afghan mission after six months, for the discussion and settlement of matters of common interest to the two Governments, and the re-establishment of the old friendship on a satisfactory basis.

Article 5

The Afghan Government accept the Indo-Afghan frontier accepted by the late Amir. They further agree to the early demarcation by a British Commission of the undemarcated portion of the line west of the Khyber, where the recent Afghan aggression took place, and to accept such boundary as the British Commission may lay down. The British troops on this side will remain in their positions until such demarcation has been effected.

The Letter of Sir Hamilton Grant

You asked me for some further assurance that the Peace Treaty which the British Government now offer, contains nothing that interferes with the complete liberty of Afghanistan either in internal or external matters.

My friend, if you will read the Treaty carefully you will see that there is no such interference with the liberty of Afghanistan. You have told me that the Afghan Government are unwilling to renew the arrangement whereby the late Amir agreed to follow unreservedly the advice of the British Government in regard to his external relations. I have not therefore pressed this matter, and no mention of it is made in the Treaty. Therefore, the said Treaty and this letter leave Afghanistan officially free and independent in its internal and external affairs.

Moreover, this war has cancelled all previous Treaties.

(Sd.) Sir Hamilton Grant

APPENDIX G

NOTE ON PROPOSALS OF THE BRITISH AND AFGHAN GOVERNMENTS DISCUSSED BY THE DELEGATES OF THE TWO STATES AT THE CONFERENCE HELD AT MUSSOORIE, BETWEEN THE MONTHS OF APRIL AND JULY 1920, AS A PRELIMINARY TO DEFINITE NEGOTIATIONS FOR A TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP

(1) It was agreed that it is in the mutual interest of both Governments that the Afghan State shall be strong and prosperous.

(2) The British Government will be prepared to reiterate the undertaking, already given by them, to respect absolutely the integrity and independence of Afghanistan, both in internal and external affairs, and to restrain to the best of their ability all persons within the British boundaries from taking action obnoxious to the Afghan Government.

(3) The British Government expect that the Afghan Government will similarly undertake to prevent to the best of their ability all action within the boundaries of Afghanistan, whether by their own subjects or by British subjects who are or may in the future be refugees from the British Dominions, or by subjects of other nations, which may tend to stir up strife or produce enmity against the British Government within the boundaries of India. The British Government expect that the Afghan Government will undertake in particular to restrain their subordinate officials and others from inciting the frontier tribes within the British Boundaries against the British, to prevent to the best of their ability the passage through Afghan territory to the British frontier of arms and ammunition and of persons intending to raise an agitation against the British Government, to prohibit preparations within Afghan territory for making raids into British territory, to punish persons found guilty of committing such raids, and to abstain themselves from all interference with tribes or persons on the British side of the frontier, and from all kinds of political propaganda within the British Empire.

(4) If the Afghan Government were willing to give formal undertakings as set forth in the foregoing paragraph, then the British Government, in the event of a Treaty of Friendship being signed, and in order to show their sympathy with the desire of the

Afghan Government to develop their country, would be willing to consider, as part of a Treaty of Friendship, the grant, for so long as the Afghan Government performed its undertakings to the satisfaction of the British Government, of assistance and concessions to Afghanistan on the following lines:

(*a*) A yearly subvention of eighteen lakhs of rupees.

(*b*) Reasonable assistance towards the education in Europe, at such places as might be agreed upon between the two Governments, of a moderate number of Afghan youths, to be selected by the Afghan Government with due regard to their educational qualifications.

(*c*) Reasonable assistance, to be granted gradually, as financial and other circumstances might permit, towards the construction in Afghanistan of railways, telegraph lines, and factories, and towards the development of mines.

(*d*) Technical advice regarding irrigation.

(*e*) The manufacture and supply of specially prepared paper for the printing of Afghan currency notes and (if necessary) provision of machines for note printing.

(*f*) Technical advice regarding the establishment of an Afghan Government or Commercial Bank, and regarding possibilities of improving the system of commercial credit in Afghanistan.

(*g*) The restoration of the privilege of importing arms and ammunition and military stores through India to Afghanistan, provided that the Government of Afghanistan shall first have signed the Arms Traffic Convention, and provided that such importation shall only be made in accordance with the provisions of that Convention.

(*h*) The grant in respect of all goods imported into India at British ports for re-export to Afghanistan, and exported to Afghanistan by routes to be agreed upon between the two Governments, of a rebate at the time and place of export of the full amount of customs duty levied upon such goods, subject to a deduction of not more than one-eighth of such duty as recompense for the work of customs registration, and provided that such goods shall be transported through India in sealed packages which shall not be broken before their export from India.

(*i*) An undertaking to levy no customs duty on such goods of Afghan origin or manufacture as may be lawfully imported into India, provided that such goods shall not be exempted from the levy of the present Khyber tolls, and from the levy of octroi in any Indian Municipality, in which octroi is, or may be hereafter, levied.

(*j*) An undertaking to permit the export from Afghanistan through India, in bond, and in sealed packages, by routes to be agreed upon between the two Governments, of opium and charas produced and manufactured in Afghanistan, provided that such opium and charas shall not be despatched from Indian ports to any destination to which the British Government are under an obligation to prohibit or limit the despatch of opium or charas.

(*k*) The facilitating of the interchange of postal articles between India and Afghanistan, and arranging in accordance with a separate postal agreement for the establishment of offices of exchange on their frontiers, provided that neither Government shall be permitted to establish a post office in the territory of the other Government.

(*l*) Permission to establish at Peshawar and Quetta trading agencies of the Afghan Government, provided that the personnel and property of the agencies shall be subject to the operations of all British laws and orders and to the jurisdiction of British courts, and that they shall not be recognised by the British authorities as having any official or privileged position.

(*m*) Permission to establish Afghan Consulates at Calcutta, Bombay and Karachi, provided the Afghan Government permit the establishment of British Consulates at Jalalabad, Ghazni, and Kandahar. The Consuls of both Governments, with their staffs, to enjoy all the privileges conceded by international practice to such officials.

(5) In the event of the conclusion of a Treaty of Friendship the British Government would be prepared, on its signature, to make the following gifts to the Afghan Government, as immediate and tangible tokens of the sincerity of their intentions:

Either the following:

A

(*a*) 160 miles of steel telegraph posts, with a double wire, to be handed over either at Chaman or at Peshawar.

(*b*) 10 new large motor lorries with spares.

(*c*) 20 new touring cars with spares, American make, owing to difficulty in obtaining prompt delivery of new English cars.

(*d*) 300 soldiers' pals (bivouack tents).

Or the following:

B

460 miles of steel telegraph posts with a double wire.

(*N.B.*—This would be sufficient for the construction of a

telegraph system from the British frontier to Kabul and from Kabul to Kandahar; but it must be explained that immediate delivery could be made only of 160 miles, which would suffice for the line from the British frontier to Kabul. The balance of 300 miles could not be made available in less than a year from now, owing to shortage of material in India.)

(6) The following points are reserved for further consideration at the time of negotiating a Treaty of Friendship:

(*a*) Permission to export from Afghanistan rouble notes through India to countries outside India where their entry is permitted.

(*b*) Representation of the Afghan Government in London.

APPENDIX H

TREATY

Preamble

The British Government and the Government of Afghanistan, with a view to the establishment of neighbourly relations between them, have agreed to the Articles written hereunder, whereto the undersigned, duly authorised to that effect, have set their seals:

Article I

The British Government and the Government of Afghanistan mutually certify and respect, each with regard to the other, all rights of internal and external independence.

Article II

The two High Contracting Parties mutually accept the Indo-Afghan Frontier, as accepted by the Afghan Government under Article V of the treaty concluded at Rawalpindi on the 8th August 1919, corresponding to the 11th Ziqada, 1337 Hijra, and also the boundary west of the Khyber laid down by the British Commission in the months of August and September 1919, pursuant to the said Article, and shown on the map attached to this treaty by a black chain line; subject only to the realignment set forth in Schedule I annexed, which has been agreed upon in order to include within the boundaries of Afghanistan the place known as Tor Kham, and the whole bed of the Kabul river between Shilman Khwala Banda and Palosai, and which is shown on the said map by a red chain line. The British Government agrees that the Afghan authorities shall be permitted to draw water in reasonable quantities through a pipe, which shall be provided by the British Government, from Landi Khana for the use of Afghan subjects at Tor Kham, and the Government of Afghanistan agrees that British officers and tribesmen living on the British side of the boundary shall be permitted, without let or hindrance, to use the aforesaid portion of the Kabul river for purposes of navigation, and that all existing

rights of irrigation from the aforesaid portion of the river shall be continued to British subjects.

Article III

The British Government agrees that a Minister from His Majesty the Amir of Afghanistan shall be received at the Royal Court of London, like the Envoys of all other Powers, and to permit the establishment of an Afghan Legation in London, and the Government of Afghanistan likewise agrees to receive in Kabul a Minister from His Britannic Majesty the Emperor of India, and to permit the establishment of a British Legation at Kabul.

Each party shall have the right of appointing a Military Attaché to its Legation.

Article IV

The Government of Afghanistan agrees to the establishment of British Consulates at Kandahar and Jalalabad, and the British Government agrees to the establishment of an Afghan Consul-General at the headquarters of the Government of India, and three Afghan Consulates at Calcutta, Karachi and Bombay. In the event of the Afghan Government desiring at any time to appoint Consular officers in any British territories other than India, a separate agreement shall be drawn up to provide for such appointments, if they are approved by the British Government.

Article V

The two High Contracting Parties mutually guarantee the personal safety and honourable treatment each of the representatives of the other, whether Minister, Consul-General, or Consuls, within their own boundaries, and they agree that the said representatives shall be subject in the discharge of their duties to the provisions set forth in the second Schedule annexed to this treaty. The British Government further agrees that the Minister, Consul-General, and Consuls of Afghanistan shall, within the territorial limits within which they are permitted to reside or to exercise their functions, notwithstanding the provisions of the said Schedule, receive and enjoy any rights or privileges which are or may hereafter be granted to or enjoyed by the Minister, Consul-General, or Consuls of any other Government in the countries in which the places of residence of the said Minister, Consul-Generai and Consuls of Afghanistan are fixed; and the Government of Afghanistan likewise agrees that the Minister and Consuls of Great Britain shall, within the territorial limits within which they are permitted to reside or to exercise their functions, notwithstanding the provisions of the said Schedule, receive and enjoy any rights or

privileges which are or may hereafter be granted to or enjoyed by the Minister or Consuls of any other Government, in the countries in which the places of residence of the said Minister and Consuls of Great Britain are fixed.

Article VI

As it is for the benefit of the British Government and the Government of Afghanistan that the Government of Afghanistan shall be strong and prosperous, the British Government agrees that, whatever quantity of material is required for the strength and welfare of Afghanistan, such as all kinds of factory machinery, engines and materials and instruments for telegraph, telephones, etc., which Afghanistan may be able to buy from Britain or the British dominions or from other countries of the world, shall ordinarily be imported without let or hindrance by Afghanistan into its own territories from the ports of the British Isles and British India. Similarly the Government of Afghanistan agrees that every kind of goods, the export of which is not against the internal law of the Government of Afghanistan, and which may in the judgment of the Government of Afghanistan be in excess of the internal needs and requirements of Afghanistan, and is required by the British Government, can be purchased and exported to India with the permission of the Government of Afghanistan. With regard to arms and munitions, the British Government agrees that, as long as it is assured that the intentions of the Government of Afghanistan are friendly, and that there is no immediate danger to India from such importation in Afghanistan, permission shall be given without let or hindrance for such importation. If, however, the Arms Traffic Convention is hereafter ratified by the Great Powers of the world and comes into force, the right of importation of arms and munitions by the Afghan Government shall be subject to the proviso that the Afghan Government shall first have signed the Arms Traffic Convention, and that such importation shall only be made in accordance with the provisions of that Convention. Should the Arms Traffic Convention not be ratified or lapse, the Government of Afghanistan, subject to the foregoing assurance, can from time to time import into its own territory the arms and munitions mentioned above through the ports of the British Isles and British India.

Article VII

No Customs duties shall be levied at British Indian ports on goods imported under the provisions of Article VI on behalf of the Government of Afghanistan, for immediate transport to

Afghanistan, provided that a certificate, signed by such Afghan authority or representative as may from time to time be determined by the two Governments, shall be presented at the time of importation to the Chief Customs Officer at the port of import, setting forth that the goods in question are the property of the Government of Afghanistan and are being sent under its orders to Afghanistan, and showing the description, number and value of the goods in respect of which exemption is claimed; provided, secondly, that the goods are required for the public services of Afghanistan and not for the purposes of any State monopoly or State trade, and provided, thirdly, that the goods are, unless of a clearly distinguishable nature, transported through India in sealed packages, which shall not be opened or sub-divided before their export from India.

And also the British Government agrees to the grant, in respect of all trade goods imported into India at British ports for re-export to Afghanistan and exported to Afghanistan by routes to be agreed upon between the two Governments, of a rebate at the time and place of export of the full amount of Customs duty levied upon such goods, provided that such goods shall be transported through India in sealed packages, which shall not be opened or sub-divided before their export from India.

And also the British Government declares that it has no present intention of levying Customs duty on goods or livestock of Afghan origin or manufacture, imported by land or by river into India or exported from Afghanistan to other countries of the world through India, and the import of which into India is not prohibited by law. In the event, however, of the British Government, deciding in the future to levy Customs duties on goods and livestock imported into India by land or by river from neighbouring States it will, if necessary, levy such duties on imports from Afghanistan; but in that event it agrees that it will not levy higher duties on imports from Afghanistan than those levied on imports from such neighbouring States. Nothing in this Article shall prevent the levy on imports from Afghanistan of the present Khyber tolls and of octroi in any town of India in which octroi is or may be hereafter levied, provided that there shall be no enhancement over the present rate of the Khyber tolls.

Article VIII

The British Government agrees to the establishment of trade agents by the Afghan Government at Peshawar, Quetta, and Parachinar, provided that the personnel and the property of the said agencies shall be subject to the operations of all British laws and orders and to the jurisdiction of British Courts; and that they

shall not be recognized by the British authorities as having any official or special privileged position.

Article IX

The trade goods coming to (imported to) Afghanistan under the provisions of Article VII from Europe, etc., can be opened at the railway terminuses at Jamrud, in the Kurram, and at Chaman, for packing and arranging to suit the capacity of baggage animals without this being the cause of re-imposition of Customs duties; and the carrying out of this will be arranged by the trade representatives mentioned in Article XII.

Article X

The two High Contracting Parties agree to afford facilities of every description for the exchange of postal matter between their two countries, provided that neither shall be authorised to establish Post Offices within the territory of the other. In order to give effect to this Article, a separate Postal Convention shall be concluded, for the preparation of which such number of special officers as the Afghan Government may appoint shall meet the officers of the British Government and consult with them.

Article XI

The two High Contracting Parties having mutually satisfied themselves each regarding the good will of the other, and especially regarding their benevolent intentions towards the tribes residing close to their respective boundaries, hereby undertake each to inform the other in future of any military operations of major importance, which may appear necessary for the maintenance of order among the frontier tribes residing within their respective spheres, before the commencement of such operations.

Article XII

The two High Contracting Parties agree that representatives of the Government of Afghanistan and of the British Government shall be appointed to discuss the conclusion of a Trade Convention and the convention shall in the first place be regarding the measures (necessary) for carrying out the purposes mentioned in Article IX of this treaty. Secondly, (they) shall arrange regarding commercial matters not now mentioned in this treaty, which may appear desirable for the benefit of the two Governments. The trade relations between the two Governments shall continue until the Trade Convention mentioned above comes into force.

Article XIII

The two High Contracting Parties agree that the first and second schedules attached to this treaty shall have the same binding force as the Articles contained in this treaty.

Article XIV

The provisions of this treaty shall come into force from the date of its signature, and shall remain in force for three years from that date. In case neither of the High Contracting Parties should have notified, twelve months before the expiration of the said three years, the intention to terminate it, it shall remain binding until the expiration of one year from the day on which either of the High Contracting Parties shall have denounced it. This treaty shall come into force after the signatures of the Missions of the two Parties, and the two ratified copies of this shall be exchanged in Kabul within 2½ months after the signatures.

(Sd.) MAHMUD TARZI Chief of the Delegation of the Afghan Government for the conclusion of the Treaty	(Sd.) HENRY R. C. DOBBS Envoy Extraordinary and Chief of the British Mission to Kabul
Tuesday, 30th Aqrab 1300 Hijra Shamsi (corresponding to 22nd November 1921)	This twenty-second day of November one thousand nine hundred and twenty-one

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(Sd.) Mahmud Tarzi, Chief of the Delegation of the Afghan Government for the conclusion of the Treaty	(Sd.) Henry R. C. Dobbs, Envoy Extraordinary and Chief of the British Mission to Kabul
Tuesday, 30th Aqrab 1300, Hijra Shamsi (corresponding to 22nd November 1921).	This twenty-second day of November one thousand nine hundred and twenty-one

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